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A view of the river Hooghly with the Calcutta High Court in the distance.

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AN
ICONOCLAST IN INDIA

*PLAIN TALES OF THE PLAINS
AND OTHER PLACES*

TOLD BY
ASMODEUS JUNIOR.

The Diary of a War Voyage and a Series of
Random Articles

WRITTEN BY
G. MELLANBY GORDON



BUTTERWORTH & Co. (INDIA), LTD., 6, HASTINGS ST.

CALCUTTA :

WINNIPEG · | · SYDNEY :
BUTTERWORTH & Co. (Canada), Ltd. | BUTTERWORTH & Co. (Australia), Ltd.

LONDON :

BUTTERWORTH & Co., BELL YARD, TEMPLE BAR.

Medical Publishers

1919

*Printed by K. C. Neogi, Nababibhakar Press,
91½, Machuabazar Street, Calcutta.*

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
FREDERICK DOUGLAS GORDON,
WHOSE LUCID AND FEARLESS COMMENTARIES,
AN ADMIRING SON FAIN WOULD EMULATE AND PERPETUATE,
AND TO HIS RELICT AND GOODLY WIFE
FROM WHOM HE DERIVED
SUCH CONVINCING FAITH AND INSPIRATION

PREFACE.

IT is sufficient, I may hope, for the author's purpose to say by way of Preface that the diurnal collection of impressions and incidents and random jottings which this book contains, bears the impress of the ingenuousness of the spirit of the moment which prompted me to record them. At that time I had no intention of giving publicity to them in book form, but I have since been prevailed upon to do so. Hence I must plead that excuse in extenuation of any adverse verdict which may be passed upon them. I am conscious of the fact that much of my lucubrations is made up of trivialities, but it is the trivial things of life which really occupy most of our attention, and sometimes trivialities are not without interest. My main object in writing the pen-pictures of cities, particularly with regard to India, is to show these places in a newer and more intimate light, and to give the reader something more by way of life and colour than can be obtained from a mere guide-book. Some of the impressions may be ill-conceived and in some cases far-fetched, but I trust they will not be considered unfair or written in any vindictive

spirit. They have been published with the cherished hope that they may please and amuse, if not instruct, and with the conviction that the best critic is the impartial critic and the best friend in life, the truly candid friend. India, above all places in the world, has need of the sympathetic interest of the candid friend, the friend without an axe to grind, and the more she can enlist the broadening influence of that potential factor in the progress of human affairs, the nearer will be her finest aspirations towards realisation. But as it behoves man to know himself, it is still more imperative that, as a nation, India should know herself. In the humble opinion of the writer, it is her conservatism and spiritual adherence of a dead past which holds her back.

Calcutta, 11th August, 1919.

G. M. G.

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AN
ICONOCLAST IN INDIA
PLAIN TALES OF THE PLAINS AND
OTHER PLACES.

IT is rather a strange coincidence that the "Cease fire" in the great War should have been sounded at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918, after the signing of the Armistice, and that Peace should have been signed on June 28, 1919, exactly five years almost to the hour from the date of the tragic event at Sarajevo which gave rise to the greatest conflagration in the world's history. The act of a fanatical student in assassinating the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his Consort on the 28th June, 1914, although it was not until some weeks later that most people were able to read correctly the sinister portents of the time, set the infernal orgie of slaughter and destruction in motion, letting loose the hordes of Kaiserdom to make its long pre-meditated and final bid for world conquest. The inevitable end is come! The barbarous forces of might that endeavoured to enslave mankind have been disarmed and broken up, and we emerge from

the sickening welter of four and a half years' carnage in the uncertain light of a new dawn, with the nebulous beginning of a new and better era for the world.

No year ever wrought greater changes in the destinies of mankind than the concluding one of the great War. None of us need be gifted with the prescience of a President Wilson in order to appreciate the fact that 1918 has fixed itself as one of the big landmarks in the annals of the world's history, and its memorable happenings will always have an absorbing interest for the peoples of every generation right down throughout the ages.

Looking back over the eventful period between Christmas 1917 and that of 1918, the contrast to one who had spent the former in London and the latter in Calcutta, seemed singularly vivid. I hardly think I am likely to forget the Christmas I spent in 1917, with everyone on more or less siege rations; the ominous feeling in connection with the military situation and the speculation which was rife as to Germany's impending offensive; the hourly menace of air raids, and the all-pervading gloom which seemed to have settled like a withering blight on the whole country. It was, therefore, not without a sigh of relief, after three years' strenuous war conditions, that I "packed up my troubles in my old kit bag" and started on my journey East.

Travel by sea at any time is never entirely un-

eventful, but in war time it has the elements of danger and adventure which exercise a peculiarly fascinating influence over most people. Some have luck and get through without untoward incident and others fall in for a sequence of tribulation and disasters which leave their impression for life, as witness the thrilling experiences of the passengers of the *Hitachi Maru*, which was captured two days out from Colombo, and afterwards sunk by the German raider *Wolf*, recently graphically described in *Blackwood's Magazine*.

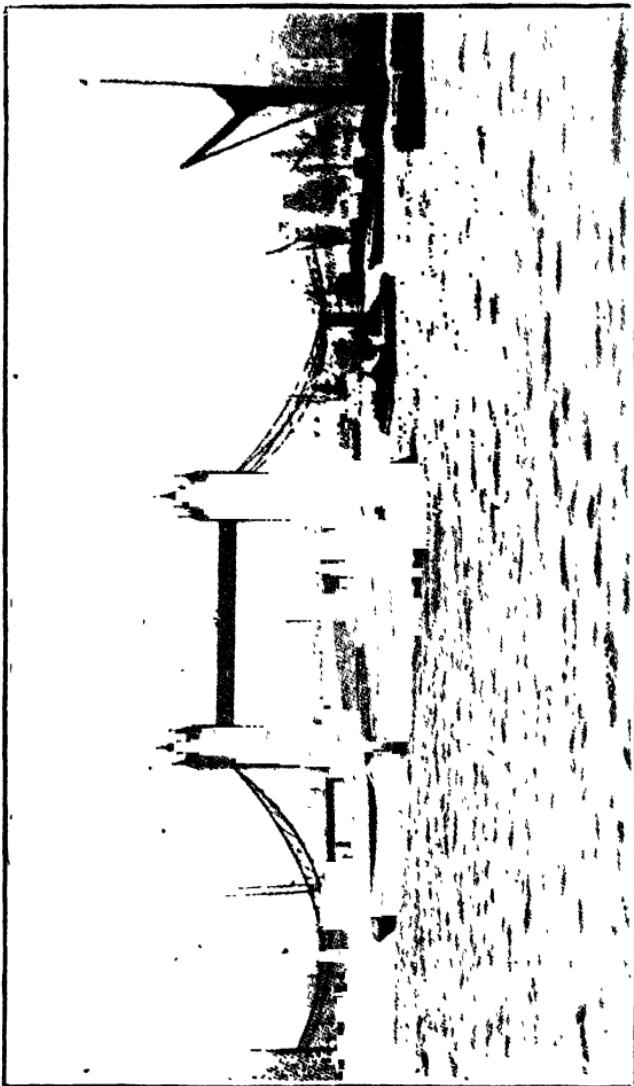
Another steamer, the *Igotz Mendi*, which was captured by the *Wolf* and after cruising the seas in company with the raider for four months went ashore on Skager Point in the Skager Rack, recently arrived in the port of Calcutta. The passengers of the *Hitachi Maru* after many exciting adventures, were subsequently transferred to the *Igotz Mendi*, and many were on board when she went ashore. Some were eventually rescued and liberated by the Danes. Most of the others on board the *Wolf* were interned in Germany.

It is not so long ago that I became acquainted at an hotel in Madras with three men who were passengers on the ill-fated *Mongolia* when she was mined off Bombay. These men met accidentally afterwards at the same table at dinner one evening. After the *Mongolia* sank two were in the same life-boat, and landed at Janjira, while the third was

picked up by a passing steamer. On another occasion I met one of the officers of the same ship, at Victoria Station, on the arrival of the train bringing back home the survivors of the *Mooltan*, which was torpedoed off Malta. The crew of the *Mongolia* were on the *Mooltan* at the time it was sunk and the officer I spoke to told me that that was the fifth time he had gone through a similar ordeal, which, he remarked parenthetically, was becoming a "damned bad habit." Such experiences, however, to men in the mercantile service were of very ordinary occurrence, and such is the inherent modesty of the man of the sea that the great part of the story of their splendid exploits in fighting submarineism, and, incidentally, keeping Britain from starvation, will never be properly told.

The publication of some of the really stirring stories of fights put up by these gallant men might have made the people of our "tight little Island" realise more readily the risks these stalwart heroes ran and possibly obtained for them a more adequate recognition of those noble silent deeds which have added so many fresh glories to Britannia's traditions of the sea. An all-discerning Press Censorship ordained otherwise, and, for some inscrutable reason, the public were kept in ignorance of these exploits, even when a "tramp" came off top-dog and managed to limp safely back to port.

In the summer of 1917 I had ocular evidence of



The Tower Bridge from the river Thames.

the mauling one boat got after a running fight of several hours duration with a U. Boat. The scrap took place a few hundred miles off the Lizard. I went aboard the ship (*the Trafford Hall*) when she was repairing in the West India Dock and saw how the bridge and deck structures had been knocked about by the shells fired at her, while the tramp's gun was out of range practically during the whole time the unequal combat was in progress. The Captain stood on the bridge until he was knocked out by a piece of the shell which demolished the wire'ess cabin, but the remainder of the crew that were not injured stuck it out and won through in the end by the timely interposition of a French trawler. It was not until some months later I learnt that the gallant skipper had been awarded the D. S. O., but the story of the fight which is only one of dozens of such stirring encounters has never been told. But possibly this is enough by way of prelude, so I will cut the cackle and begin the story of the voyage of the *Iyo Maru* which is best told, perhaps, in chronological fashion.

UNDER CONVOY.

December, 29th.—Left Fenchurch Street at 11-35 A. M. After undergoing a long wait at Tilbury Station during which passports were inspected, got aboard tender about 2-30 P. M. and eventually the *Iyo Maru*, moving slowly down the Thames,

came into view. We embarked about an hour later, proceeding down the river and anchoring off South-end. Having got on board too late for lunch, I was more than agreeably surprised with the excellent dinner and the quality and astonishing variety of the fare provided. Compared with war rations on shore, it was like being suddenly transported to another sphere where peace and plenty reigned supreme.

December, 30th.—With the break of day we moved into the estuary of the Thames, and soon picked up one or two large boats steaming in the same direction. Weather cold and hazy and could only just pick out the white cliffs of Dover as the steamer stood off there a short while at about 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon.

December, 31st.—Awoke to find the steamer hugging the Devonshire coast and close to Start Point. There was a good deal of excitement on board when it became known that a steamer had been torpedoed about 3 o'clock the same morning not many miles away from us. We received a wireless message to that effect, the victim being sunk 5 miles West of the Lizard. Felt more reassured as we neared Plymouth and pleased with the prospect of joining a convoy there to accompany us through the danger zone. Got into harbour about 11-30 A.M. and took up a position amongst a number of other vessels—some present-

ing a crazy kind of effect in the manner they were *camouflaged*, one vessel in particular painted in many vivid colours having the appearance of a switchback railway—also awaiting convoy. Our first greeting was a rather disappointing one. We were informed that we had just missed a convoy and consequently there was a prospect of the steamer having to wait at Plymouth some days for the next escort. A small pilot vessel coming alongside when we had dropped anchor, a voice directed through a megaphone from the bridge, interrogated the Captain of our ship: Who are you?—Where are you from?—What have you come here for?—What's your cargo?—What's your speed?. Bouyed up with the prospect of getting ashore and relieving the tedium of the delay by occasional jaunts around Plymouth, we settled down prepared for a wait of anything up to a week or more.

New Year's eve was a painfully tame affair, the monotony of which was unrelieved even by the mild sensation of having a solitary drink, a hardship which was keenly felt by the ship's chronicler. After dinner there was a brave effort to maintain a cheery and as festive a mien as the occasion and circumstances would allow, having regard to the fact that there was an embargo on all liquors and smokes on board. Things lagged dismally about 11 o'clock and the stalwart attempt of the small

party assembled in the dining-saloon to sit up and welcome the New Year in was abandoned.

One of the first notable incidents on board occurred the first night we were at sea. Two of the second-class passengers got uproarious, being several nautical knots removed from sobriety, and as it was a very dark night one of them fell down a companion-ladder and broke a rib. Hence the Captain put an embargo on the liquid refreshments, closing the bar until the ship got out of the danger zone. Thus the innocent often suffer for the transgressions of the guilty and thus it came about that we spent an exceedingly dry Hogmanay.

January, 1st.—The dawn of another fateful year! It commences with a pretty cold and cheerless outlook. In the early morning there was a fairly heavy snowfall and a piercing wind blowing which drove most of the adventurous spirits who attempted to while away the time playing deck games back to the solitude and warmth of their cabins. By noon the weather brightened and the snow disappeared from the ship, but the surrounding country was clothed in a mantle of white, enhancing the beauty of the panorama-like view of the hills around the fine harbour of the western metropolis.

January, 2nd.—Beautiful summer-like day. Passengers interested watching the seaplanes circling round the harbour, rising prettily from the

water and alighting on it again after a short flight out to sea. Man comes on board early in the morning with newspapers and also does a brisk trade by retailing the commoner brands of packet 'cigarettes at siege prices. This is the war profiteer's last little farewell squeeze, so far as we are concerned, and we are happy in the contemplation of escaping his clutches, for a little while at all events. Bad cess to him! Much disappointed, as all hopes of getting ashore after many unfulfilled promises, are now definitely abandoned. Passengers while away the time by writing letters and posting dinner menu cards to their friends ashore. Rest of the day chiefly spent in speculating as to when we are likely to sail. The same evening a pinnace runs alongside and sailor comes aboard with sailing orders.

January, 3rd.—Notable activity on board ship preparatory to sailing. Started to move about 3-30 P.M., being preceded out of the harbour by a steamer with a *camouflage* scheme which surveyed from a short distance almost paralysed the optic nerve. Steaming out in single file as far as Eddystone Lighthouse, the vessel leading the line circled round and headed down the Channel in the direction of Dover, but shortly afterwards slowed down. The following escort, including an armed merchant cruiser, the *Armadale Castle*, and five destroyers and three other steamers behind, formed into three separate lines with two destroy-

ers ahead and two others screening the convoy, one on either side. Darkness was setting in as our imposing little fleet headed south, flash-light signals studding the gathering shadows of night in the middle distance and the rapidly darkening sky-line with brilliant darts of light. Finally from the bridge of the armed cruiser on our starboard side, flashed the signal "12 knots," and like phantoms our little fleet gradually faded away into the darkness and the night. It was with a pleasing and reassuring feeling of security we turned in that night and woke next morning to find our formidable neighbour, the *Armadale Castle*, a few ships' lengths away and the sinister looking grey destroyers careering backwards and forwards ahead, like fox-terriers scenting out the rodents of the deep, while piloting us safely through the worst part of the danger zone of the high seas.

January, 4th.—Pretty heavy sea running, becoming more tempestuous as we roll along, at times shipping seas green over the side of the vessel, towards the Bay. The ship ahead of us keeps moving her position from starboard to port and *vice-versa*, pitching and tossing in the swell, while the destroyers caper about ahead and bob up and down like porpoises. Watching their evolutions under conditions which are comparatively favourable, one wondered and half realised what the sensation is like on board one of these swift and silent sentinels while prowling the

North Sea in the teeth of a "brave nor'easter." The thought was also brought forcibly home to one: How little the average man at home realises what sea power really means or but dimly imagines the stupendous task our Navy performs in their ceaseless watch and vigilance keeping open the vital highways of the seas along which our merchant fleet are ever coming and going to and from the four corners of the globe. Towards night the wind increases, the sea running high and the vessel shipping tons of water, flooding the cabins and saloon. During dinner the ship rolled so badly that notwithstanding the "fiddles" on the tables, one board was cleared of pots and dishes and the passengers were kept busily engaged chasing plates and other bric-a-brac up and down the other dining tables.

January, 5.—Sea calmer. On looking out of the cabin door at daybreak was surprised to discover that the naval escort and rest of the convoy had vanished. We had parted company after darkness set in the night before, the convoy officer previously warning us that we were showing lights and ordering us to have them obscured at once, seeing we were not "a blinkin' cinema show." The day passed without incident, except that the clock was put back over an hour, showing that we were shaping our course practically due west, heading right out into the middle of the Atlantic. All the passengers had been allotted their places in the various life-

boats on either side of the ship and early in the morning we were told to muster on the boat deck with life-belts on. An officer with one or two of the crew were in charge of each boat and were assigned about a dozen passengers, half European and half Asiatic. Finally after a full dress rehearsal and being instructed how to fasten our life-belts securely, the Captain checked the complement of each boat and this important precautionary measure being satisfactorily carried out, we resumed the ordinary daily round of ship life.

January, 6th.—There was a perceptible change in the temperature which was much warmer, making our heavy winter clothing feel rather burdensome. Quite a cosmopolitan attendance at church service and one also thoroughly representative of the empire on which the sun never sets. There were several Japanese naval officers on board and two were present at the service, the officiating clergyman, a Church of England missionary in Nyasaland, making suitable reference to our gallant Far Eastern ally. Later in the afternoon, life-boats which had been swung out in case of emergency, were hauled in, the wind rising and the general weather conditions being best described in the nautical term "dirty".

January, 7th.—Weather moderated slightly, but the sea has still a nasty "bing" on, and in the dark watches of the night with the ship creaking and

groaning to the rhythmic thud of the engines, one's feelings about a life on the ocean wave, especially in war time, are by no means entrancing. One has a haunting dread of being fetched up with a sudden jerk, and after much restless meditation twisting and turning in one's bunk, the haunted-voyager is occasionally seized with an irresistible impulse to go on deck in order to satisfy himself that there is nothing hovering about. Looking out of the cabin door, the first thing one notices is the moon. "Damn the prying moon," is the thought which suggests itself while surveying the dark and dreary waste of water by the dim light of the waning lunar crescent, "why didn't we wait a few more days until it had petered out?" A cold, creepy feeling possesses one as the dread thought flashes across the mind what might happen if and afraid of one's own thoughts and the ominous look of the lugubrious, bulgy-looking life-saving waistcoat hanging on a peg at the side of the cabin,—already fitted up in case of need with a capacious brandy flask and a two-horse-power scout whistle to arouse the echoes of the deep in the event of a death struggle in the water,—one creeps back into the bunk to toss about fitfully until the first light of dawn chases away the phantoms of the night and puts a more cheerful complexion on the outlook of the day. But there are voyagers and voyagers—and this personal digression to the diary of the voyage of the *Iyo*

Maru should not be taken to apply to anyone except the ship's chronicler, poor timid-hearted soul. The only incidents of the day are the receipt of the first wireless news on board and the opening of the bar for a short while in the evening as a concession to a few of the passengers who feel the need of an occasional "livener." It may be noted, *en passant*, that compared with the ruling prices on shore, drinks on board are comparatively cheap, but the more stimulating liquors are reputed to have a *Ju-Jitsu* strangle-hold of remarkable potency. "No wonder it broke one of the other feller's ribs," remarked a meditative passenger as he toyed with a wee one before dinner, "the marvel is that it didn't break his heart."

CHASED BY SUBMARINES.

January, 8th.—Heaven knows where we are, but as the clock has gone back nearly three hours, we must be somewhere on the American side of the herring pond. Squally weather, with heavy sea and strong head wind. There is some consolation in the fact that dirty weather is in our favour, but we are all yearning for the genial days and balmy nights of the tropics. The general feeling on board is best expressed in the elegant diction of the passenger who remarked : "It wont half be orl right when we give the Canaries the go by."

January, 9th.—Hell of a night! No one had any sleep on board. The man who came down to

breakfast next morning and pretended that he had slumbered through the tempest without losing a wink was nearly thrown overboard. Mere words are inadequate when one attempts to describe the intense agonies of body and mind experienced during the dead of night while the vessel is being pitched about like a cork in a boiling, hissing sea in mid-Atlantic, a thousand or more miles from anywhere, straining and lurching frightfully at times; the hull of the ship vibrating and quivering as her engines race when the propeller comes out of the water. Adding to the tumult is the incessant swish of the driving rain, the intermittent thud and rush of water as the descending seas beat on the decks, and the wind shrieking and howling a soul-piercing accompaniment to the infernal din and turmoil which goes on without intermission during the fury of a storm at sea. All it is necessary to add is that worse adventures of this sort do very often happen at sea than befel us that night, but the passengers of the good ship *Iyo Maru* were more than impressed with the choice sample of weather we picked up *en route* to the Cape in the North Atlantic.

January, 10th.—By daybreak the sea had moderated somewhat, and the disturbing elements of the night were completely effaced by the thrilling incident which supervened about 9 o'clock the same morning. Most of the passengers had just finished

breakfast when the Purser hurried into the saloon with a rather tense expression on his face, which generally wore a particularly expansive smile, and announced that two submarines had been sighted. With one accord everyone rose from the tables and rushed up on deck, prepared to find a U boat on either side of the vessel awaiting the signal to give us the *coup de grace*. Happily the situation was not so critical as that, although dimly on the horizon at the stern of the vessel could be discerned the blurred outline of what looked like a lighthouse with two or three smaller objects near it. Glasses were focussed from all quarters of the ship by the passengers, most of whom crowded the stern end of the vessel, and a number of the crew, in the direction indicated. There was a lengthy period of suspense, which was considerably intensified when one of the naval officers came down from the gun platform and informed us that we were being chased by three submarines, accompanied by two other vessels, one of which was an armed cruiser evidently acting as escort. The chase, however, had already been in progress over an hour, but by cramming on every ounce of steam and quickly altering his course at the moment it was obvious the enemy were attempting to head us off, the Captain of the *Iyo Maru* managed to keep his pursuers at a respectable distance astern. Eventually, after nearly three hours' exciting chase, we shook the

devils off and the skipper, much to the relief of everyone on board, gave the "all clear."

Later the Captain confessed that the *Iyo Maru*, which has the reputation of being a lucky boat, had had the luckiest escape it was conceivable for a ship to have, in such a formidable encounter, and said it was the rough sea that had saved us. Since parting company with the convoy a week ago, we had not seen a ship of any kind. It was about 8 o'clock in the morning when the Captain first sighted something on his starboard beam, steaming at right angles to our course and coming directly towards us. His suspicions were aroused when a little later the mysterious-looking craft altered their course a point, apparently with the object of cutting us off. The moment they altered their course, the Captain observed three submarines, one large, and two smaller ones, only the conning towers being visible. They were accompanied by two other vessels, one of which was a schooner. The other appeared to be a gunboat. The Captain, to use his own phrase, "thought the game was up", but decided to give the enemy a run for all the ship was worth. Going full speed ahead, we began cutting it out at about 14 knots in a heavy sea, the Captain having altered his course so as to bring the pursuing warship and U boats astern, and at the same time he brought his 47 gun into position. It was hopeless, however,

attempting to put up a fight against such overwhelming odds and our only hope lay in the doubtful chance of not being overtaken. As we were at least a thousand miles away from land and right out of the track of other vessels, an S. O. S. was equally hopeless, so altogether the odds were decidedly in favour of a verdict of *Spur'los versenkt*. The issue remained in doubt nearly three hours, when, after a determined chase, the enemy disappeared. A very uneasy feeling, however, pervaded the whole ship that day and many were the speculations as to whether we were not being followed by some hidden foe lurking within striking distance for a more favourable opportunity. The opinion expressed by the Japanese naval officer that the parent ship escorting the "subs" could easily overtake us, did not tend to reassure us as to the possibility of making good our escape, but fortunately the day passed over and nothing untoward happened. Nothing could have been more admirable than the calm and unconcerned manner in which the crew went on with the usual work of the ship while the excitement on board was at its height. As an instance of the coolness displayed generally by a very cosmopolitan collection of passengers, it may be interesting to note that several who had been disturbed in the middle of the morning meal, went back while the enemy were in full cry and finished their breakfasts,

doubtless with much the same sort of feeling that the condemned man experiences when he makes a hearty breakfast before being hanged. Only a few of the passengers put on life-belts, but most of those in the steerage, principally Chinese, were ready for the worst. They presented a rather comical sight as they sat stolidly in their cork life-belts on the hatches of the after-hold, waiting with celestial resignation and a medley of personal effects around them tied up in bundles, for the turn of events. There was a good deal of playful banter indulged in amongst the English passengers and the wits, or "lads of the village," twitted the faint-hearted ones, lumbered up with life-saving gear, rather unmercifully.

January, 11th.—Day breaks with a more cheerful aspect and there is not that "jumpy" feeling apparent which obsessed the passengers yesterday. The chief topic is the lucky escape we had and we have discussed the *pros* and *cons* of our great adventure from every possible angle, but we can't understand why Fritz let us off so lightly.

January, 12th.—Now well in the tropics, the weather getting decidedly warmer and the sea smoother, although there is a fairly heavy swell. Day's run of steamer put up in the saloon for the first time. Dist. from London 2,659 miles. Distance run 275 miles, Dist. to Cape Town 4,771 miles.

January, 13th.—Still warming up. Although

tempered by a beautiful breeze outside, the atmosphere inside the cabins is pretty sultry. Still it is a perfect day. Cerulean skies and blue seas, with flying fish flashing in the dazzling sunlight. What a contrast to the Sunday in the Channel a fortnight ago! Run for the past 24 hours increased from 275 to 287.

4 P. M. Sight three-masted barque in full sail about 7 miles off on the port bow. Caused a good deal of diversion on board and more ground for speculation. The "fat boy" gets busy again making our flesh creep and reminds us of the wily tactics of the enterprising Hun by using a sailing ship to screen a "sub." and his misgivings are to some extent endorsed by the gun-crew training our 47 on the innocent and fleecy-looking wind-jammer. But we refuse to be depressed, despite the fact that many strange things happen at sea these uncertain times.

January, 14th.--Heat rather oppressive. Getting very near the "line." First Sweepstake on the day's run. Won by the ship's doctor. Ship's officers and crew blossom forth in white "ducks."

January, 15th.--About half way to the Cape and 15 degrees from the Equator. Temperature about 78° , but not nearly so enervating as yesterday. Chinaman in the steerage won Sweep and was celestially happy about his windfall. New moon visible.



Keeping cog, on board ship while crossing the "Line."

January, 16th.—Our Allies are having all the luck on board. Belgian passenger won the first prize to-day. Swimming bath erected on the fore-deck occasions much diversion amongst the passengers. Man from Rhodesia has the distinction of being the first man in. This is regarded as a promising change as he is usually the last man out of his bunk in the morning. Clock put forward 10 minutes for the first time.

January, 17th.—Very near the "line". Hot oppressive day, culminating in a heavy downpour in the evening, followed by an electric storm which continued throughout the night. Clock again put on 10 minutes.

January, 18th.—Remarkable sight last night. The sea was alive with phosphorescent light. Watched the effect after midnight from the stern of the ship. The wake of the vessel resembled a beautiful bespangled train, glistening and scintillating with myriad emerald-green and sapphire lights. Some patches were so luminous that they illuminated the whole of the stern-end of the ship as though it were brilliant moonlight. The reflection of these translucent portions of the ocean, teeming with molecules of phosphorescence magnified by the churn of the propeller, was visible nearly a mile off in the wake of the ship.

* *January, 19th.*—Crossed the "line" at 2-15 A.M. Three weeks to-day since leaving Plymouth and

parting company with the convoy. We have only met one sailing vessel, with the exception of our encounter with the U boats. Beautiful moonlight night. Cooled and amused ourselves by holding a pyjama concert while sitting on the taffrail of the after well-deck, in close proximity to the bar. One of the passengers supplied the music by performing on a Portuguese guitar, a beautifully soft and melodious instrument which sounded very charming in the still balmy air of a moonlight night.

January, 20th.—Another Sunday, the fourth we have spent on board. Nice fresh breeze blowing. Sea smooth and a Mediterranean blue. Our vessel at noon was about 600 miles off St. Helena, according to what the Captain told me this morning. Passed Ascension about 200 miles to the east of the island in the afternoon. Syren sounded in the morning and caused a bit of commotion on board until we discovered it was the signal for Fire Station drill. The evolutions of the crew on the two lower decks entertained passengers for half an hour and occasioned a good deal of camera sharp-shooting. Event clashed with church service, which was very thinly attended. Padre, who is quite "a sport", darns his socks, and on a good Sunday too!

January, 21st.—About 700 or 800 miles on the other side of the "line". Weather dull but cool. My cabin companion laid up with a sprained ankle. Changed bunks in order that he might have the

lower berth. Several minor accidents on deck yesterday. One of the Belgian passengers doing "stunts" in the swimming bath, performed an elegant somersault dive into tank and landed on the head of another bather. The collision laid both out. When the diver revived he explained that he fully expected to find he was in the open sea, as he thought he had jumped too far, hit the side of the swimming bath and gone overboard.

January, 22nd.—Fine fresh morning, the light blue of the sky, bordered with white masses of cumulous clouds, making a striking contrast against the deep blue of the sea. Expect to reach Cape Town a week to-morrow. Arrangements completed for entertaining Captain on Saturday night and skipper announced his intention of entertaining passengers on the night before we arrive at Cape Town. Gorgeous sunset and perfect moonlight night. "Lads of the village" improved the occasion by a midnight "rag", tying up cabins doors, etc. and finishing up with a general pillow fight, much to the joy of some and intense annoyance of others.

January, 23rd.—Just off St. Helena. Weather conditions much the same as yesterday, although sea somewhat of a greyer hue. Contretemps between Padre and the morose Dutchman, otherwise known as *Ichabod*, at the breakfast table. Dutchman protests against behaviour of English aristocrats in connection with previous night's rag and

complains that he was rudely awakened from sleep by a "biff" on the head with a pillow. Padre retorts, somewhat heatedly, that it is just such persons as he who usually do get "ragged" and epithets such as *cur* and *ass* are freely exchanged between disputants, the Dutchman accusing the Padre of being a partisan of the English clique. This is the first real jar amongst the passengers during the voyage. Dutchman said later he was thrashed mercilessly with a pillow and that if he finds out who did it he will never forget his assailant all his life.

5 P.M. Sighted vessel on starboard bow. Saw smoke curling up above horizon before her masts and funnel were visible. After keeping her in view some time, both vessels altered their courses to the east and west respectively, evidently with the view of giving each other a wide berth.

January, 24th.—There was another orgie of "ragging" on board last night. Awakened once at about 2 A.M. and chased somebody round the deck with a can of water. Earlier in the evening one of the ring-leaders who had poured pepper and flour down a ventilator on to a party playing cards underneath in the Saloon, was collared after a long hunt and doused in a bath of cold water. Much colder to-day, but still very pleasant. Night cloudy, moon obscured. Saw Southern Cross for the first time.

January, 25th.—Rather dull grey morning.

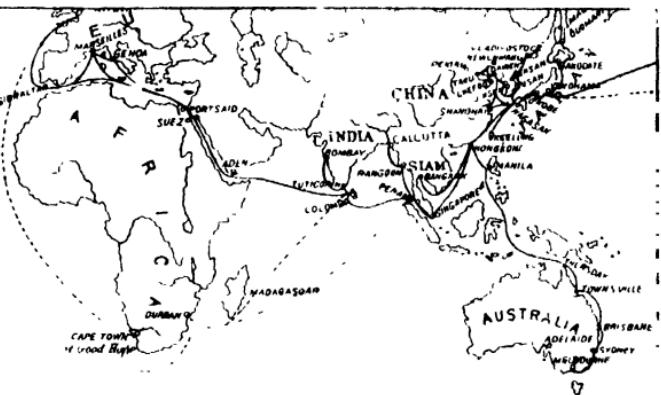
Nice cool breeze and smooth sea. Scallawags again on the rampage until early hours of the morning. Getting somewhat fed up with this imbecile form of nocturnal amusement and some of the passengers, particularly Belgians, rather raw on the subject. Swimming bath dismantled, so no more evening dips this side of Cape Town. Received a wireless on board about 11 o'clock, stating that the Governor of Canary Islands reports engagement between British warships and two submarines off Ferro, one of the Canary Islands. Two German sailors picked up refused to disclose fate of the submarines. These U boats were evidently part of the same lot the *Iyo Maru* encountered, which is borne out by the fact that the Captain of our boat received two messages from other steamers which had sighted submarines in the same vicinity at about the same time we came in touch with them.

On the 6th January, the Captain also received a wireless announcing the presence of submarines near the Canaries.

'Heard good story with regard to bath-steward, nick-named "The Tyrant". This attendant was most assiduous in the performance of his office of High Ablutioner, but despite all his efforts could not regulate passengers so that he could make four or five baths serve about 40 people without clashing. With this object in view he started off early in the voyage calling some passengers as early as

5 o'clock, practically in the dead of night, by putting his Sphinx-like face close to the unhappy sleeper, and, when the latter showed signs of consciousness, pointing at him with his index finger and shouting in peremptory tones : *You bath!* "The Tyrant's" complaint later in the voyage was "Passengers all come one time". A Hollander passenger, who was not very punctilious about his morning ablutions, was apprised one morning by the bath-steward with the usual laconic phrase, *You bath!* The Hollander shook his head and was about to roll over again in his bunk, when the inexorable bath attendant with his accusing finger marked his victim down with the retort : "You no bath *very long time*, you come *now*"! Not the least amusing part of the incident was the submissive manner in which the Hollander followed his tormentor to the place of execution.

January, 26th.—Morning dull and rather chilly, but towards noon the air became very still and the sea very calm and "oily". Ship's doctor has phenomenal luck, winning the sweep no less than twice and pulling off three second prizes, two of which he bagged to-day. Ran the sweep and visited the steerage, stowed away in the bowels of the ship, to induce some of the Chinese passengers to take tickets. Found it very much like an opium den and although it was high noon and pretty warm on deck, most of the celestials were laid out prone in



S.S. "IYOMARU"

Commander S. Takino Saturday, January 26th, 1918

COMPLIMENTARY DINNER

In recognition of the skill whereby the Commander evaded
Attack by three German submarines

10th January, 1918

Hors d'Œuvre

Spiced Anchovy, Caviare Toast, Jardiniere Salad

SOUPS

Grenadine Dickinson.

Potage à la Victoria

FISH

Salmon à la St. George

ENTREES

Cimier de Chevient à la Hannay

Vol au-Vent à la Fraser

Asparagus Vinaigrette Sauce

JOINTS

Roast Sirloin of Beef, Horseradish

Boiled York Ham, with Spinach

POULTRY

Roast Young Turkey, Cranberry Sauce

Roast Pheasant, Chestnut Sauce

VEGETABLES

Potatoes, Boiled & Browned

Sauté Sprouts

SWLTS

Plum Pudding

Ornamented Cakes Glace Rustique à la Maderne Petits-four

SAVOURY

Cheese Omelet

their bunks as motionless as though under the influence of some potent narcotic.

The dinner given by the first-class passengers in honour of the Captain as a tribute to his seamanship, which very largely contributed to our escape from the three submarines, was a very interesting and successful ceremony. The enthusiasm and spontaneity of the function was strikingly demonstrated by the rousing cheers which were accorded again and again to the Captain and his gallant little crew. The presentation of a gold fountain pen, the only suitable souvenir that could be obtained on board, as a small mark of our sense of gratification and appreciation, was accompanied by a renewed outburst of ringing cheers, as was also the Captain's reply, which he delivered with some difficulty in English. The gathering was representative of many nationalities and was unique in many respects. The Japanese naval officers wore full-dress uniforms and decorations, while the British and Belgian armies were represented, and amongst other countries, Siam, France, Belgium, Great Britain and many of her colonies, the only absentee amongst the first-class passengers being the misanthropical Dutchman. Proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and a toast to the only woman on board, a Japanese stewardess.

Celebration was followed by a bit of an orgie in the smoke-room and turned in about 2 A.M.

January, 27th.—Fifth Sunday on board and most of the passengers anticipating with eager expectation our arrival at Cape Town either on Tuesday or Wednesday morning. Day beautifully clear and cool with fresh breeze and slightly choppy sea, which in these latitudes is a very brilliant blue. At noon we were 632 miles from Cape Town. London to Cape 7,418 miles.

January, 28th.—Distinct change in the climatic conditions. Dull grey morning, strong head wind and very choppy sea, which during early part of day was enveloped in rather thick mist. Early hours of the morning dull and damp.

January, 29th.—Changed course at 4 o'clock this morning, going due east. Heavy cross sea running and strong wind blowing from the south. "Lads of the village" had a kind of farewell flutter on deck after everybody had retired last night, many feeling qualms owing to the rough sea. The practical joke played on most of the English passengers took the form of going to each cabin at intervals until well after midnight and wishing the ocean-bored or otherwise-wretched denizens, effusive farewells, coupled with mock solicitous enquiries about their health, and hopes that the rough weather was not disturbing them. To-night the Captain entertains passengers to dinner. About 100 miles off the Cape at 4 P.M. Weather fine and clear, but fresh gale blowing and heavy, confused cross sea

running that made many passengers feel uneasy. Not a happy prospect for the Captain's farewell dinner.

A SEASCAPE—

The appearance of the sea is possibly finer than I have seen it during the whole voyage. The white horses come riding on in brave array, cresting the surging main, as it rises to a lighter tone of opalescent green, with waving plumes and a delicate embroidery of milky white. The spindrift shimmers in the sunlight like a film over the deeper green tints of the sea, forming ever and anon a rainbow effect on the heaving surface of the waves, or a flying feathery plumage shot with streaks of iridescent light.

The colouring of the sky is in striking contrast. It is a pale, clear blue, fading on the horizon to a very faint azure tint, streaked with fleecy masses of cumulus clouds. In the near distance one or two gulls circle backward and forward in graceful sweeps, rising and falling with out-stretched pinions, which never seem to move except to elevate or deflect their tips, over the crest of the waves and now and again disappearing for a second or two in the trough of the sea.

It is a perfect seascape, and adds one more memorable picture to the many glorious marine scenes I have watched with awed interest by day and night before and since we crossed the "line."

—AND TABLE MOUNTAIN

January, 30th.—Dining-saloon was profusely decorated with festoons of flags of the allied nations, Japanese lanterns, and tricolour garlands in honour of the passengers who were entertained by the Captain at a farewell dinner. On this occasion there were no toasts, and the function was a very ordinary one, part of the passengers afterwards entertaining themselves with gramophone selections, after an abortive attempt to work up a sing-song. Went to bed about midnight and was awakened before five o'clock next morning by someone shouting into the port-hole of my cabin : "Next stop, Cape Town!" It was just dawn and the "South-easter" which was blowing across Table Mountain was biting cold. Stood on deck a few minutes in my pyjamas watching the view. The sight of land again was not a little fascinating, but the feeling uppermost was one of curiosity to know what the first impression of Cape Town, seen from a distance at sea, was like. It was truly a striking picture. The distant horizon was blotted out by a towering, jet black mass of rock, capped with a sable plume which enshrouded the summit of Table Mountain and overhung its precipitous brow somewhat similar to the folds of a table-cloth. At the distance we were from the land, it looked like an immense inky smudge, fading off into a lighter murky shade towards the summit of the mountain.

II.

CAPE TOWN IN WAR TIME.

MOST of the passengers were astir on deck at an early hour, and there were some strange effects in impromptu attire owing to the coldness of the morning. The most striking figure was the Padre, robed somewhat after the style of an Indian Squaw in a blanket with a glaring red streak down the part which covered his back. The general effect of this in combination with the trousers of his pink pyjamas, ill-fitting canvas shoes, the fluttering locks of his semi-baldhead and the merry twinkle in his eyes, beaming through *pince-nez* glasses, was distinctly comical. A few of the other passengers were much less picturesquely attired in soft caps and overcoats worn over their pyjamas.

When an hour or so later the sun had risen, the ship having moved close up to the harbour entrance, the panoramic view of the town in the clear golden light of the early morning, with Signal Hill in the middle distance and Table Mountain towering 3,500 feet high in the background, encircled with a canopy of grey cloud and flanked on either side by Lion's Head (a peak the summit of which forms the shape of a lion's head) and the Devil's

Peak, was one of surprising beauty and of infinite natural charm. The clarity of the air, together with the refreshing nip in the breeze, which became somewhat violently gusty at periods, was as stimulating as champagne. The simile might also be applied to the golden tints which suffused the mountain slopes and the pretty amber-colouring of the buildings, dotted around the foot of the mountain, bathed in the rich mellow light of the rising sun. Around the marge of the bay extending towards Sea Point, the blue Atlantic rolled in gentle ripples to the silver strand, encircling it with a carpet of scintillating blue which merged into a beautiful emerald green, fringed where it lapped the reef or shore with a border of glistening white.

Immediately after breakfast and almost as soon as the boat was moored alongside the dock quay, I went ashore and spent most of the morning roaming about the town. My first impression of Cape Town was a decidedly pleasing one and I was struck by its spic-and-span aspect and the brand new, up-to-dick look of the buildings, with their cream-coloured or ochre facades and airy verandahs. There was a scrupulous cleanliness about everything, particularly the well-kept roads, which, if anything, was somewhat obtrusive in its effect on the new-comer. There was an air of eminent respectability, snug tidiness and to the drab-minded denizen of the war-smitten Motherland, an opulent

prosperity about everything and everybody which seemed to belong to another world. Adderley Street, the main thoroughfare, is a wide boulevard which runs through the chief centre of the town. At the sea end, it is extended a considerable distance into the Bay by a magnificent, wide stone pier, which has been built of late years. The street was agog with a throng of well-dressed people, the women mostly in white, while on either side of the road a pretty large concourse of leisurely onlookers, sipping coffee or eating ices, were gathered in the open verandah cafes. Opposite the Standard Bank, which is possibly the most solid and imposing building in Adderley Street, a few dozen coloured street-hawkers lined the pavement with baskets of many-coloured flowers, and trays of luscious-looking peaches, grapes and other fruits.

Presently there is still more animation amongst the crowd, and at the same time a general rush of people inside the buildings on either side of the road to the verandahs, as the strains of a band playing "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag," become more audible. The cause of the commotion soon becomes evident as a few men—not more than a couple of dozen, some in khaki and some in civilian attire—march down one side of the street, headed by a military band. They are new volunteers for the front proceeding to training camp up-country.

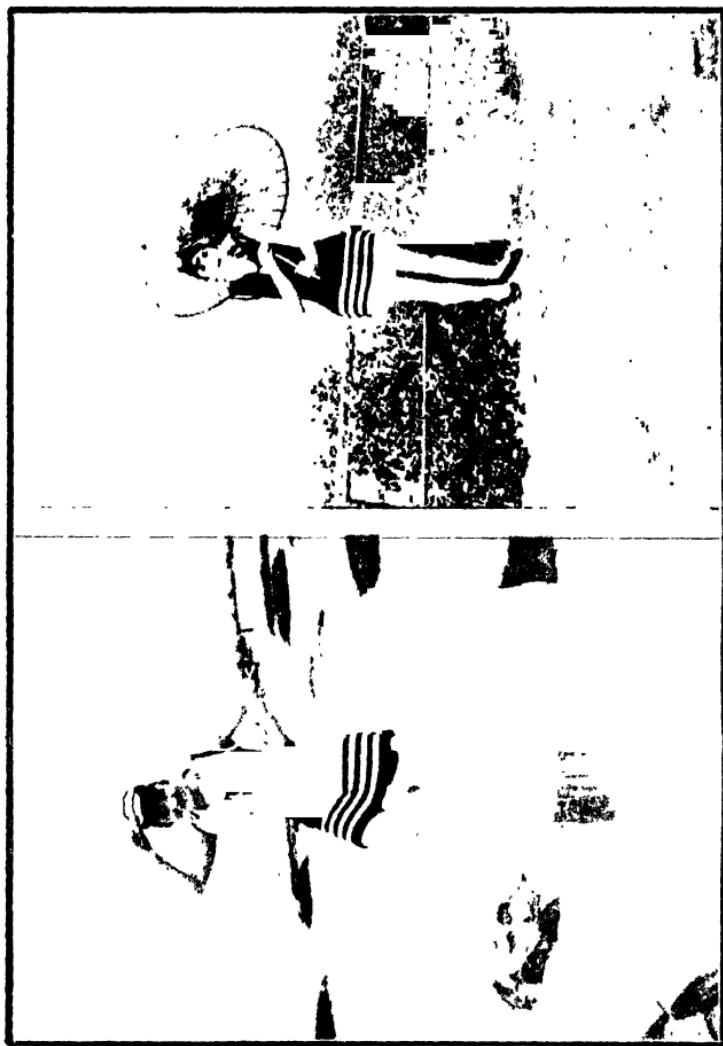
"Most of them," remarked a bystander, "are men back from German East Africa and have re-enlisted."

"So apparently you don't get many men under the voluntary system", I queried.

"No", was the ready response, "they're all doing too damned well out of the war here to think about lending a hand to shorten it."

This commentary may or may not represent the true patriotic spirit of the people of the capital of Cape Colony, but there was an air of ease and luxury in the atmosphere generally which made it hard to realise there was a great world war in progress, not many hundred miles away from the other end of the Continent where these scenes were being enacted. A few thousand miles had transported us into another world, where such things as air raids, food queues and the hundred and one painful inflictions of that never-to-be-forgotten helot of the great War, "Dora," were, if not unknown, as remote from the actualities of life as the Poles are asunder.

One of the peculiarities of Cape Town is that its residential localities are scattered nearly all over the Peninsula. The business part of the town is comparatively small, and the bulk and importance of the place is made up of straggling suburbs, extending around the slope of the mountain and across the Peninsula as far as Wynberg and Sea



A budding Venus pausing before taking the plunge at Muizenberg.

Point, and the many surrounding health and pleasure resorts, such as Muizenberg and Camp's Bay. The latter, which is one of the favourite seaside resorts, is an extremely delightful spot, and although the "South-easter" made it decidedly unpleasant during my visit, the terrific gusts of wind carrying clouds of sand which made sight-seeing rather a painful ordeal, the peculiar climatic condition that day in many ways enhanced the beauty of the scene. This was particularly remarkable in the exquisite colouring of the sea. The deep blue of the Bay changed as the water became more shallow into vivid contrasts of emerald and sapphire. The effect as the surf broke on the rocky shore and rolled in against the wind, falling on the silver strand in a snow-white foamy spray, was singularly beautiful.

There is a remarkable difference in the temperature of the water around the Cape Peninsula. Where the Atlantic ends and the Indian Ocean begins, is a controversial question of keenly-disputed geographical interest. Whilst the temperature of the sea on the Table Bay side of the Peninsula is freezingly cold, that on the False Bay side is comparatively warm and eminently suited for bathing. Hence the popularity of Muizenburg, very often referred to as Jewsenberg, as a seaside resort. According to the scientific theory, this is explained by the coast line on the Table Bay

side being washed by the South Atlantic, into which runs an Antarctic current, whilst False Bay at the southern-most end of the Peninsula catches the warmer current which sweeps down the Mozambique Channel into the Indian Ocean. This is said to account for the fact that on one side seals and whales abound, whilst in False Bay there is shark. Another peculiarity of the Cape, due to the two temperatures of the water, is a vapoury fog which at times hangs on the surface of the water to a height of about 20 feet above the sea, entirely obscuring a vessel except the masts and top of the funnel.

The tram ride around the lower slopes of the mountain, via Sea Point to Camps Bay and back to Adderley Street by way of the Kloof, is an exceedingly charming one, and in some respects is strikingly reminiscent of the scenery of the Corniche outside Marseilles. The motor trip over the road which winds up to a much higher altitude of the mountain, is still more impressive. Part of the improvement scheme of Cape Town, which would have been carried through before now but for the war, is a marine drive extending something like 80 miles along the Peninsula between Table Bay and Cape Point.

A visit to the House of Assembly while parliament was sitting, was an interesting and instructive feature of my short stay at Cape Town. It is a

light, airy and fairly commodious chamber, modelled on the same style as the House of Commons, the Speaker presiding, when the House is not sitting in committee, in Court dress and full-bottomed wig and gown. The Minister of the Interior, who was on his feet at the time I entered the Strangers' Gallery, was introducing a Bill for the extradition of offenders back to South-West Africa. He explained the objects of the Bill first in English and then in Dutch. Like the town itself, it is a parliament of dual languages, and the Dutch in the legislative assembly undoubtedly had the preponderating influence. There seemed to be something more than a spirit of friendly rivalry. There was, in fact, many evidences of an acute racial feeling between the two communities. The most privileged class is the Dutch farming community, which has a powerful voice in the political affairs of the country and can extort almost any concession out of the Government. A still more insidious influence is the politico-religious propaganda movement carried on by the Predikants or leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church.

•After a very good dinner at the Opera House Restaurant, where I had previously had lunch, I spent the evening with a fellow passenger at the theatre in the same building. The performance was *Home on Leave*, and was very creditably acted. One peculiarity of the theatre was the low

rumble, like the roll of distant thunder, which went on almost continually throughout the performance. At first I was puzzled to know what it meant and thought it was part of the stage effects, but later I discovered it was the sound of the "Cape Doctor," the pseudonym for the blustering south-east wind which is such a familiar feature of Cape Town, rumbling in the roof of the building.

January 31st.—Came ashore for an hour in the morning and left Cape Town about noon. Japanese cruiser in the harbour attracted a good deal of attention, most of the crew assembling on deck as we moved away from the quay and signalling farewell messages to four Japanese naval officers who joined our ship to return to Japan. Amongst a number of other new passengers were several ladies going to Durban.

In the outer harbour we passed a Norwegian steamer heavily laden with coal, a large quantity of which was piled on the deck. Suspicion being aroused as to the destination of the cargo, and the fact that the skipper wanted to take on board a thousand pounds sterling worth of provisions, which the authorities refused him permission to purchase, the vessel was unable to proceed and had been lying in the outer bay for several weeks.

February, 1st.—At sea once more. Weather calm and sea smooth. Deck games in full swing, several of the lady passengers joining in the golf contests.

February, 2nd.—Steaming up the South African coast close to the shore. Land plainly in view during rest of the journey to Durban. Good view of East London, which was brilliantly illuminated, particularly the building in which I was informed a carnival was being held.

February, 3rd.—Spent a cheery evening in the Captain's cabin, the lady passengers being amongst the favoured guests. Sighted the lights of Durban about midnight, and turned in about 1 o'clock after the ship had anchored off the Bluff.

February, 4th.—Moored alongside the quay at 7 o'clock in the morning, after lying at anchor off the Bluff all night. Went ashore after breakfast, and drove round the Berea, visited the Zoological Gardens and had lunch at the Marine Hotel. In the afternoon drove round the town, and got back to the ship in the evening. Had dinner aboard, and went to the theatre, "Maid of the Mountains."

February, 5th.—Ship moved over to the coal wharf early in the morning. Went ashore after breakfast. Met a passenger on the *Iyo Maru* in town, had lunch at Eastern Cable Coy's quarters, and afterwards spent an hour at the Southern Club. Had dinner at the Eastern Cable Coy's quarters. Went to the Criterion Theatre and stayed night at the Marine Hotel. Strong gale and rain in the evening.

February, 6th.—Spent the morning in town and

after posting letters and papers, got aboard ship just before noon. Boat left Durban shortly after lunch. About a dozen new passengers on board. Heavy swell a few miles out, and things rather tame and dreary generally after a pretty good time ashore.

III

THE PORT OF NATAL.

BEAUTIES AND CHARMS OF DURBAN.

DURBAN was peculiarly disappointing. Probably it was because I had heard such eulogistic descriptions of the beauties and amenities of this "truly British" elysium of South Africa and expected too much. The impression I left with, after two day's sojourn, by no means confirmed all the glowing testimonials I had listened to with more or less enraptured anticipation before we anchored in the roads off the Bluff. The Natal port prides itself on being "the most British town in the most British colony in Africa," and it bears the hallmark of that fine distinction in a manner which commends it, even on the most casual acquaintance, as the real genuine article.

Durban bears many unmistakable evidences of a painstaking industry which has converted a sandy waste into the makings of an imposing modern city. It combines a pretty generous proportion of those other sterling attributes of Bonny Scotia, from which, like so many other parts of the British over-seas dominions, it has drawn many

of its founders and best citizens, that may be best described as "canny." Its City Fathers appear to be as profound as their handiwork in many notable directions, most strikingly expressed in the palatial edifice which glorifies their official abode, has been prodigious.

There is nothing ambiguous or rotten in the state of Durban, so far as the stranger in its midst can observe. Some consider it is much too sweet to be wholesome, but they are irresponsible, wayward, or loose-thinking people.

The town gossips, abominable traducers as such people usually are, do talk, or rather whisper, about "carryings on" of a Saturnalian character on the Berea, which is the chief European residential quarter. But nobody has any direct evidence to bear on the subject. They have never been to this mythical Abode of Love themselves, but they all know the "other feller" who frequents that unholy shrine of Venus quite intimately. And the Circes who hold their nocturnal court in this ambrosial retreat, are all highly respectable and may be found in all their sweet simplicity serving at the counter of one or other of the big shops in town during the daytime. Which only goes to prove, that "be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny."

Durban by a course of systematic physicing has purged itself of all the noxious matter in

its constitution, and although it has rendered itself somewhat anaemic and uninteresting in the process, it has an unblemished exterior. It is as placid as a maiden who has just been confirmed. If it ever experiences any unusual emotions it is too modest and well-bred to let the outside world know anything about them. In fact, in its ostensible communal virtues, it is as singular in its distinctive qualities as the striking apparel and grotesque head-dress of its Zulu rickshaw runners are in their Futurist and archaic features of design. In short, Durban exudes an atmosphere of middle-class British gentility, and a meticulous sense of the fitness of things, which are worthy of the best traditions of Balham and Tooting, or any other equally eminent examples of British suburbia. Its most prominent citizens and social leaders, not to mention an influential faction of misguided but well-meaning religious busy-bodies combined in a powerful organisation known as the Church Council, which "washes over the public morals," exercise a nice discrimination in all things which appertain to public morals and the social well-being of its thirty odd thousand European and forty odd thousand native, Asiatic and coloured inhabitants.

From the picturesque standpoint, there is no comparison between Cape Town and Durban. The great charm of the former place, entitling it

to rank with Naples, Rio Janeiro and San Francisco, as one of the most beautifully-situated seaports of the world, is the magnificent mountain which rises behind the town in a sheer precipice to a height of 3,500 feet, cutting the sky line with a jagged horizontal front two miles in length. With the exception of the Bluff, which, surmounted by a lighthouse, stands out boldly at the entrance of the harbour, and a small range of hills rising behind the town, of which the slopes are covered with pretty villas and gardens, Durban is built on a flat sandy tract of waste land. The rising ground behind the town is known as the Berea and forms the chief residential locality. In some respects it bears a slight resemblance to Malabar Hill, Bombay's most salubrious residential quarter, but is lacking in much of the picturesque charm of the Parsee's Arcadian retreat. Still, the Berea is a beautifully wooded bit of elevated ground and commands some fine views of the town and harbour of Durban. The remainder of the town is flat and with the exception of the principal centre in the immediate vicinity of the Town Hall, and the Post Office, two massive and strikingly handsome edifices, has a rather unfinished and *kutchha* aspect. West Street, the main business thoroughfare, is a fine broad artery. On either side there are many big buildings, but in some instances standing cheek-by-jowl with a miniature sky-scraper of some seven or



Water nymphes posing on the Beach at Durban.
The Piccaninny's position was in many ways an enviable one, but he regarded the situation with marked stoicism.

eight storeys, is a more or less ramshackle shanty of low elevation with a corrugated iron roof. The front of the principal theatre which faces one side of the upper end of West Street is a squat, insignificant-looking building, the top floor of which opens on to a verandah extending over the pavement below. In appearance it is inferior to a cheap suburban picture house in a third-rate town at home. Durban has many similar anomalies, and a rather more curious incongruity is the location of a modern-looking cemetery in the heart of the business centre of the town. This is situated at the top of West Street and obtrudes itself suddenly on the stranger's vision with a rather unpleasant shock. Once remote from the town, it has now become too central and for this reason has been closed.

The morning I arrived, early in February, the weather was extremely close and sticky. Like Bombay at certain times of the year, there was a considerable amount of humidity in the air and as the day advanced the temperature became still more oppressive. Although used to warm climates, I felt the heat very much that night while sitting in the theatre, which was suffocatingly hot. I hired a rickshaw in the morning, but the poor devil of a Zulu sweated so copiously while pulling me up the first part of the rising ground of the Berea that I got out, paid the perspiring ruffian what he asked,

2s. 6d. for 10 minutes stifling jog-trot—the proper tariff, as I afterwards learnt, being 2s. an hour—and finished the journey in coolth and comfort on a tram. Both Durban and Cape Town have excellent trainway systems, but in contradistinction to the Natal seaport, which affects the picturesque but not too comfortable rickshaw as its favourite private vehicle of locomotion, Cape Town for some unknown reason has adopted the handsome cab, the majority of which are broken-down conveyances with popular or high-sounding titles such as "My Pretty Jane" or "Lord Roberts," "Kitchener," etc. emblazoned in bold letters on either side of the super-structure.

The climate throughout the months of Durban's winter season, May to September, is uniform and excellent, much resembling that of southern France. The mean normal maximum for the winter is 76.2° and the minimum 56.1° . During the summer months October to April the heat, although healthy, is more tropical. The popular season in Durban extends over June and July, during which months the place is invaded by a rush of holiday-makers from Johannesburg, 482 miles away. The sea bathing is the principal attraction, and Ocean Beach during the summer months is the scene of daily aquatic carnivals.

A notable feature of the latter resort until a few months ago, when part of the structure was



A classic study on the Golden Beach at Durban.

demolished during a storm, was a semi-circular pier which formed a promenade and also afforded protection for bathers in the enclosed area against sharks.

Durban has a fine natural harbour, the inner basin of which covers about eight square miles, provided with 13,200 feet of wharf and quayage. It possesses one of the most up-to-date coaling appliances, the latest being an automatic system capable of loading 400 tons of coal per hour. With its splendid harbour facilities, cheap and abundant supplies of water, electricity and coal, united with the progressive policy which has always characterised the town, Durban is destined to become the chief entrepot and one of the great manufacturing centres of the South Africa of the future.

EN VOYAGE.

February, 7th.—Ship very quiet after the lively crowd we had aboard up to Cape Town and the jolly little party from there to Durban. Not enough people to make things hum, notwithstanding the fact that we have amongst the passengers a man and wife from Kimberley who are blessed with seven very young children. They are all aboard, and they certainly keep my side of the ship "all alive O". But it is not the kind of liveliness one looks for to add to the amenities of ship life.

An interesting passenger who joined the ship at Durban is Denis Santry, the cartoonist of the *Rand Daily Mail*. He showed me a book of reproductions of his cartoons, and, later in the day, a wonderful collection of Japanese prints.

Captain invited me to join a small party he is entertaining to-morrow at a dinner in *pucca* Japanese style.

February, 8th.—About 500 miles from Durban, half way across the Mozambique Channel. On the last homeward journey the Nippon boat, *Hitachi Maru*, which left Colombo a fortnight ahead of the *Iyo Maru* for Delagoa Bay, took the short route, entering the Mozambique Channel at the northern end of Madagascar. She has not been heard of since and it is believed she struck a drifting mine, which, probably, had been carried down from the minefield outside Bombay on which the P. & O. *Mongolia* came to grief, and sank without leaving any trace of her.*

February, 9th—Just six weeks since we left London. We are now well in the Indian Ocean somewhere off the southern end of Madagascar. There is still a heavy swell, and plenty of spray coming aboard, but the air is much fresher and life on board, although insufferably dull, is a little more supportable than yesterday.

* A wire published some weeks later stated that the *Hitachi Maru* was sunk by the German raider *Wolf*.

Experienced my first Japanese meal. Wonderful array of dishes, but had great difficulty in wielding the chop-sticks. Saki very good ! Served in small porcelain cups and reminded me very much of sherry warmed up. The key-note of the dinner was fish, *Tai* principally, and was rather amused with the weird-looking fish head with an evil-looking eye staring out of a lacquer bowl full of water. Under the impression you had to eat the head, but discovered you only had to drink the water, which was rather palatable and tasted something like eels. Japanese *Uni* had a flavour something like concentrated essence of cockles, and some of the pickles were exceedingly nice. The soup, a rather weird mixture, composed of mushrooms, chestnuts and other unknown odds and ends, which had the appearance of thick cocoa, was quite all right. Think I might get quite attached to the diet with a little practice.

February, 10th.—Seventh Sunday ! Changed to a north-easterly course, and the ship instead of rolling is now pitching in the heavy swell. Towards noon ran into heavy bank of cloud and driving rain squalls, which had a very monsoonish appearance. Somewhere east of the southern end of Madagascar, having changed course a few points north.

February, 11th.—Weather in the early morning dull, with rain squalls at intervals. Towards noon

weather cleared and the sea for the first time since leaving Durban became calm, with a refreshing, cool breeze blowing. Half a dozen passengers, including self, have an hour's physical culture drill under the instruction of Santry. Effect very beneficial and invigorating and resolved to make it a feature of the daily routine while on board ship. To-night Captain entertains small party to another Japanese dinner in honour of the accession of the first Emperor of Japan, who flourished only 2578 years ago.

February, 12th.—Ideal day. Sky of azure and opal, calm, blue sea, ship almost as steady as a house. About 1500 miles across the Indian Ocean. Quite pleased with my second Japanese dinner. Menu was somewhat different, and included grilled chicken, which eaten with Japanese sauce was very good. Japanese anchovy is very briny and creates a lovely thirst. Soup on this occasion was served nearly at the end of the dinner. Spent a very pleasant evening afterwards in the Captain's cabin and slaked the anchovy thirst with whisky and soda. Captain promised to give orders for the swimming bath to be put up again.

Chief event of the day was mixed bathing in the afternoon. Spent over half an hour in the swimming bath, the water being delightfully warm and clear. New moon visible

February, 13th.—Just a week since leaving Dur-



A lady competing in the coin diving contest in the swimming tank on board the "Iyo Maru."

ban. Position at noon between Reunion and Mauritius. Our course is too far east of both islands for us to see land. To-day the Indian Ocean is at its best, the air being beautifully clear and invigorating. Had a swim at 7 A.M. and an hour's drill at 9 o'clock.

February, 14th.—Started the day with an early morning swim. Atmosphere not quite so fresh as yesterday. Clock now being put forward about 20 minutes a day and on two consecutive days it was advanced 40 minutes. Thus the time between breakfast and lunch is considerably curtailed. Position at noon :—

Durban	2007.
Dist. run	261.
To Singapore	2954.

February, 15th.—Swim at 7-30. Fine clear day with fresh breeze blowing, azure sky and delightfully calm, blue sea.

A TROPICAL CONSTELLATION.

First quarter of the moon gives a wonderful charm to the early part of a beautiful tropical night. Later the sky is studded with myriads of stars, the Milky Way stretching athwart the majestic blue-black dome of night and shedding on the still surface of the ocean a rather nebulous and ghostly silvery light, which lends a weird, phantom-like

effect to the darker shadows of the distant clouds. Venus in all her resplendent glory lies well down on the horizon, and casts a broad silver beam across the sea, while Mars flashes forth its scintillating splendours with a radiance which shoots out into the circumambient ether like fiery darts. To the north, the Great Bear spreads out its gigantic proportions on the sky line, and the Southern Cross is suspended like a pendant from the densely star-sown firmament which crowns the southern skies. It must need a graphic pen to describe the celestial splendours of such a glorious tropical night.

February, 16th.—About half way between Durban and Singapore. Position at noon near the Chagos Archipelago, 19 degrees off the Equator. Atmosphere not so clear as yesterday and slightly more humidity in the air. Sea very calm and sky overcast with greyish cumulus clouds.

February, 17th.—Eighth Sunday on board the lugger! Seems quite an age since we left London. The sea has an "oily" look and the air is still and oppressive. We are now in the Colombo wireless zone and to-day received the first war news for about a week. Sighted a steamer—the first since leaving Durban—on our starboard bow about 1 o'clock. Only two masts and funnel visible for some time, but later could see the vessel's hull. Looks rather like a Blue Funnel steamer. Before-

leaving Durban we had heard many rumours about a raider prowling about the Indian Ocean, but we refused to be scared.* Heavy thunderstorm at night.

February, 18th.—Following last night's storm there was a considerable amount of swell, and in consequence of the rough sea no water was put into the swimming bath in the afternoon. A thunder storm at sea is a fascinating as well as awe-inspiring sensation. Although the thunder claps were rather muffled and distant, the flashes of lightning were extremely vivid and lighted up the wide expanse of ocean as if by the illumination of an immense charge of magnesium. The storm abated after midnight with a heavy downpour and the sky at 7 o'clock in the morning was of a dull, leaden hue. Later the weather assumed a monsoonish aspect, and the rain squalls were so dense that it was impossible for the lookout to see more than a few yards ahead. No sun visible all day. Cool, fine moonlight night.

February, 19th.—Bright, fresh morning with calm sea. Water in the swimming bath colder than usual, but enjoyed dip in the early morning after missing a day through bath not being filled on account of the unsettled weather.

* There was foundation for this rumour, as the German raider *Wolf* was still at large about this time.

February, 20th.—Crossed the Equator about 5 o'clock in the evening, making the second time we have gone over the "line" in the course of four or five weeks. Smooth blue sea and climatic conditions remarkably good, the temperature being about 83° in the shade. With the soft breeze created by the motion of the ship, it is quite delightfully cool on deck. At the time of crossing the "line", I was disporting myself in a portion of the Indian Ocean, and was solemnly "ducked" according to the ceremony usually observed on the occasion and officiated over by Father Neptune. Aided by favourable currents, the ship made the best day's run during the voyage, namely 306 miles. Expect to see land on Friday evening and to reach Singapore on Monday.

February, 21st.—About 400 miles from the northern end of Sumatra. Position at noon about two degrees north of the Equator. Weather conditions and temperature much the same as yesterday. Deck illuminated with lights for the first time during the voyage, although restrictions with regard to lights in cabins have not been so rigid since leaving the Cape. This marks our entry into what is considered the safety zone and we celebrated the occasion with a dance on deck.

February, 22nd.—You never can tell! The American lady on board greeted me this morning with marked favour. She was pleased with my

tooling last night and tickled with my "Salome" dancing. "I was agreeably surprised with you last night," she remarked, "I thought you were such a serious chap." The American lady curiously enough is an appallingly staid and serious person herself, but obviously enjoyed the performance on deck last night. It was a combination of dancing, singing, wrestling, mock drama, comedy, legarde-main and a variety of other stunts and parlour tricks. It ended up in one of the Japanese officers insisting on us having copious quantities of "nightie caps," as he called Scotch whisky, and a furious argument with a Scotsman, whose ancestry must have gone back to the early Picts. What with the wild, irreconcilable Irishman on board, who is always singing about his lady's eyes, when he is not breathing treason and rebellion, and the other chieftain from the Land of Cakes, who always seems to be well soused in his national juice, we have some thrilling interludes, especially in the smoke-room; where the merchants most do congregate.

The American lady was sporting a large rosette of tri-colour ribbons. The explanation of this unwanted gaiety on her part turned out to be the anniversary of George Washington's birthday. Picked up the light of Poeloch Bras, flashing every 5 and 20 seconds alternately, about 11 o'clock at night. Celebrated our approach to land again with more zeal than discretion and as a result of many libations

to the land of his adoption, and overcome with joy on his return to its territorial waters, the Hollander more or less ran amok and alarmed nearly the whole ship by going round the deck after midnight blowing a powerful scout whistle. The wife of the Kimberley diamond digger, who had blessed her lord and master by presenting him with seven gems, all of the first water, much startled by the noise. Scenting danger ahead, she asked her uneasy spouse whether they had to get into the boats and he replied, "I don't know. I'll go and see." Having restrained the Dutchman's enthusiasm by administering another dose of brandy from my life-saving waistcoat, he subsided and we all went to sleep.

February, 23rd.—In the Strait of Malacca, but no land visible all day. Temperature rather warmer, sun streaming in fiercely during the afternoon into my cabin on the starboard side. Miss the swimming bath, which, owing to a rent in the canvas, was dismantled yesterday. Sent wireless message to Penang announcing our arrival at Singapore on Monday morning. Exactly eight weeks since leaving the Thames.

February, 24.—Ninth Sunday. No land yet in sight. Peculiar weather; still, humid atmosphere, the sky being heavily overcast with dull grey clouds, while the sea is perfectly stagnant. It has a nasty oily appearance and a depressing slaty hue. About noon passed a number of sampans, (small

Chinese sailing craft with brown lug sails) and several steamers going west. An hour later passed One Fathom Lighthouse, which stands on an iron trestle base, marking a shoal in the centre of the Strait. Anchored opposite to it, and about a mile off, was a Japanese destroyer. The living objects on the water becoming more numerous and interesting. Passed a flotilla of sampans quite close to us. The sea is as smooth as a pond, and with their brown sails hanging limp in the still air, the sampans look as though they were stuck on glass.

2 p. m. First view of the land since leaving Durban.

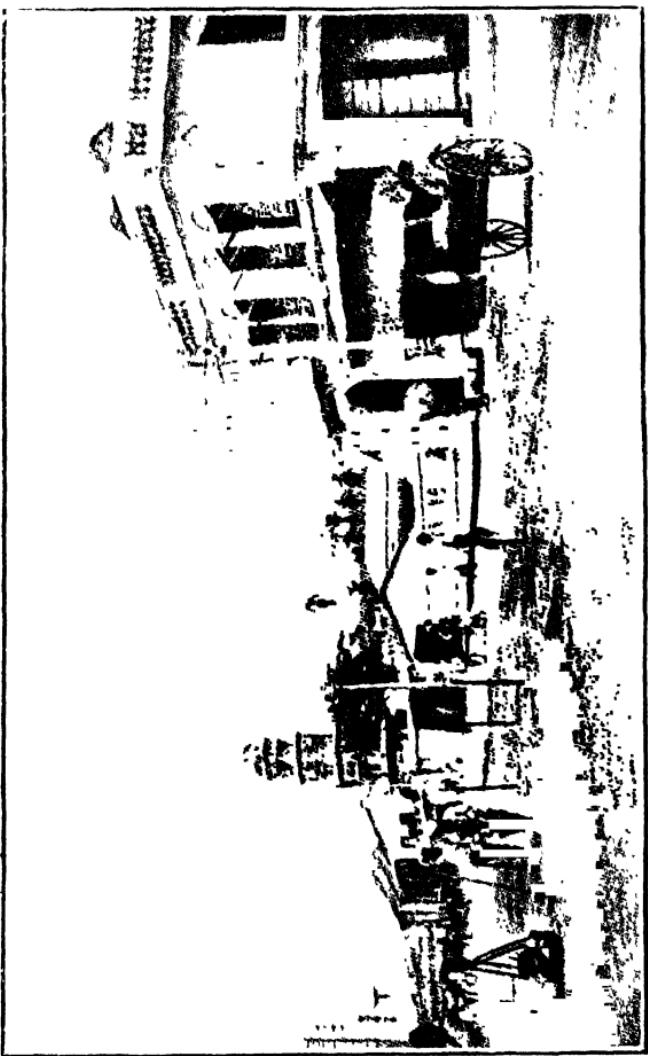
February, 25th.—7 a. m. Approaching Singapore. Sea studded with small green islands, forming a delightful archipelago and a seascape of exquisite colour and variety.

IV.

CITY OF ISLES.

SCENES AND SMELLS OF SINGAPORE.

SINGAPORE itself, as Santry observed, is a place of wonderful colours, smells and dirt. The Chinese festival *Tjap Go Meh*, or 15th day of the first moon of the New Year, was celebrated the same night we arrived and as the bulk of the native population is Chinese, the streets were crowded with people, chiefly Straits-born Chinamen with their wives and families in holiday dress. The principal streets and public promenades, like Connaught Drive, were agog with an endless moving stream of jinrikshas, motor-cars and other vehicles and there was an incessant din of sharp reports like the perpetual crack-crack of a very big whip. This was caused by the crowd letting off Chinese crackers, which were flying about in golden showers of sparks in every direction. From inside many of the native shops these fireworks were being ignited and thrown out into the road so rapidly that there was a continual rattle of explosions and the jinriksha coolies were running along the streets through a tornado of fire and burning embers, which



Street view of Singapore showing the Hindu and Mohamedan Temples.

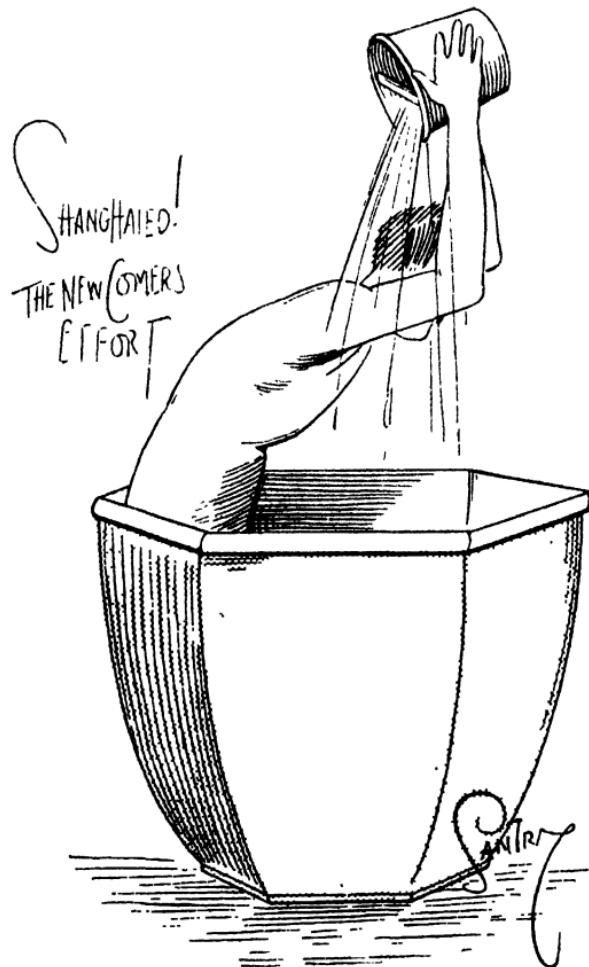
covered the ground in many places several inches in thickness. For the nonce, the prevailing stink of Singapore, which is strongly reminiscent of an offensive drain, was dominated by the more agreeable smell of gunpowder. There was a beautiful full moon and seen by night with the town brilliantly illuminated and the native quarter teeming with a kaleidoscopic mass of moving colour and light, it would be difficult to witness the capital of the Straits Settlements in a gayer or more resplendent mood. By day the picture was by no means so fascinating and the predominant note was the typically Indian aspect of the town ; the same old-fashioned, gaunt looking premises, with narrow, dirty porticoes, packed with merchandise of all kinds and intersected from the roadway by slimy-looking open gullies. It is some time since Singapore had any rain and it stinks aloud at certain times of the day, particularly at low water, when the Singapore River hums a pretty lively tune. The river here intersects the business end of the town from the Esplanade and is crossed near the G. P. O. by two bridges. One is a suspension bridge, named after Cavanagh, and is reserved for pedestrians and light traffic. The lower end of the turgid stream, which takes a rather sharp turn and forms a landing quay on one side for a number of business houses, is usually packed chock-a-block

with crazy-looking native craft covered with mat canopies at the stern and presents a very animated and picturesque scene. But at low tide, the water is black and slimy and from the smell which arises appears to be very foul. But, by long habit no doubt, Singapore people seemed to be "manured" to smells. It is pretty hot in the daytime, but not excessively so. One can get about, even walking, fairly comfortably and at night-time it is quite cool and chilly enough in the early morning for one to need a blanket on the bed.

Hotel accommodation in Singapore, although it cannot compare with the standard of excellence in this respect of Colombo, is good, but expensive. The Straits currency is, or was, confined exclusively to a dirty collection of paper money, of which the one dollar, and smaller ten cent. notes, were possibly the most objectionable. The dollar, the sterling value of which is normally 2s. 4d., has about the same purchasing capacity as the rupee (1s. 4d.) and whereas Calcutta hotels charge daily rates ranging from 8 to 15 rupees a day, according to the season of the year, Singapore charges about the same rate, or a little more, in dollars.

There are one or two distinctive features about hotels in the equatorial zone which are rather quaint, and possibly not a little disconcerting to the newcomer. For instance, it was the first time I had used a Shanghai jar in place of a bath, and

being uninitiated I naturally thought the proper *modus operandi* was to sit inside it. The Shanghai



The above sketch, which was dashed off in a few seconds at Raffles Hotel by Mr. Denis Santry, the late cartoonist of the *Rand Daily Mail*, shows how the newcomer usually takes his first plunge, but he soon resorts to the more strategical, if less refreshing, method of standing up outside the jar and pouring the water over himself with a tin can.

jar no doubt varies in size, but the specimen I encountered was about two or three feet high, with a rather small aperture at the top and swelling out to more generous proportions in the middle. The story, which, like many other entertaining yarns of the East, is no doubt apocryphal, is told of a lady of comely figure who got stuck in one of these jars while performing her morning ablutions. In response to her appeal for help, the hotel *mistri* came to the rescue, and with the aid of a hammer ultimately succeeded in extricating the distressed damsels from her embarrassing predicament.

The custom of sleeping with a "Dutch wife" in the bed, also struck me as being a quaint feature of the domestic side of Singapore life. To those unenlightened on the subject, it may be as well to explain that a "Dutch wife" is a long pillow or bolster which is placed in the centre of the bed, and is a recognised institution as a means of inducing slumber in the Far East,

February, 26th.—Employed day going round the town. Said adieu to Santry at Raffles Hotel. I suggested to him a small sketch and he dashed off the Shanghai tub incident. I went on board ship, got remainder of my luggage and settled down to await events and a ship to take me on to Colombo. Met another fellow passenger in the morning at Little's Store in the restaurant. He showed me an

exceedingly funny sketch of himself by Santry. Had lunch on a Dutch steamer lying in the harbour near Johnson's Pier. Tried "Rice-table" for the first time. This is a typical Dutch eastern dish, designed on Gargantuan proportions and comprising different assortments of viands and condiments, numbering anything up to 40 or 50. It takes a retinue of nearly 20 servants, each carrying two trays, some of which hold as many as a dozen different piquant assortments, such as curried prawns, cucumber, chillies, fried plantains, etc., to serve this item of a very ponderous, and stodgy menu.

March, 1st.—Drove round Chinese native quarter. Visited Chinese temple dedicated to the God of the Sea. Interesting performance, in the course of which I exploded a Chinese cracker to propitiate the Wind God and incidentally play old Harry with any devils hanging around.

CHINESE FUNERAL PROCESSION.

The most curious spectacle I witnessed was a Chinese funeral procession. The cortege was an immense affair, compared with which a circus parade pales into insignificance and the Lord Mayor's Show is but a poor imitation, devoid of colour and incident of any kind. The whole of the procession must have extended a mile or two. There were innumerable bands, some Chinese,

some Indian, and, although the occasion evidently was a solemn one, the effect was weirdly bizarre, comical and gharish in the extreme. The two striking figures at the head of the cortege, male members of the deceased's family, were particularly remarkable in their demeanour. Dressed in white tunic suits and straw hats, they slouched along with an air of abandon which suggested a "bean feast." The common briar pipe stuck at a jaunty angle in the mouth of one of the two principal mourners, was not the least comical touch to a ceremony, which for strange figures, weird noises, peculiar symbols, including all manner of delicacies, as well as images in tall glass cases, roast sucking pig being attractively dished up in one of the peripatetic shrines, was about the most fascinating and bewildering thing I have ever seen. One instrument played by the Chinese musicians struck me as being surprisingly musical in the midst of the din and clatter of other barbaric forms of music. It had a wailing note suggestive of a French hautboy (oboe) and sounded rather like the lost soul of the departed Chinaman calling for the sucking pig.

After a two hours' motor spin round the outskirts of Singapore, I was much more favourably impressed with the island. The environs are very clean, picturesque and well-kept. Amongst other things, I visited a big Chinese Buddhist Temple, saw rubber plantations and took a sample of the

natural rubber from the trees, and finished up by viewing a private menagerie collection. The latter included an immense ourang-outang, a red-haired, evil-looking monster which stood six feet high. It gave one a shudder to contemplate the brute. There was so much in his construction and facial adornment, a conspicuous feature of which was a drooping sandy moustache, that was so closely allied to the human. Here truly was the very devil in man's shape, but even this horrible abortion does not oppress me so much as the thought of a Hun.

March, 2nd.—Packed up and ready to leave for Madras when at 9 A.M. I was told that the boat would not leave until 4 o'clock the next day. I am introduced to a rather remarkable Scotsman, which is possibly not a remarkable thing in the East. Having dined with him at the Hotel Van Wijk, I spent an hour at Looney Park, an appropriate perversion of Luna Park, where a mixed crowd of Singapore residents make merry by riding on round-abouts, joy wheels etc.

March, 3rd.—Repacked and having settled up my hotel bill and had tiffin, the Scotsman came to the hotel and accompanied me to the boat to see me off. A Dutch passenger on the *Iyo Maru*, also came on board to say adieu. Had a hearty send-off, the Scotsman being particularly enthusiastic in his farewell demonstrations. Steamer left at 4-30 in the afternoon.

Boat so crowded I have to put up with a second-class cabin, which I shared with two other men. The accommodation and feeding on this packet is distinctly rotten. Cabins dirty and dilapidated and swarming with cockroaches. Shipmate in the bunk below discovered one crawling up one of his nostrils, and I found others had chewed away the back of my collar during the night. Steamer packed with Indians and it is intolerably hot during the daytime.

March 4th.—Arrived at Port Swettenham early in the morning and remained there until about 2 o'clock, but did not go ashore as there was nothing but a railway station and a few huts to be seen. Damned uncomfortable on board and the Goanese cooking vile.

March 4th. Arrived at Penang just as the sun was rising over the hills opposite George Town. Drove round the town, after spending an hour at the E. & O. Hotel, which commands a fine sea view. The Island of Penang is delightfully picturesque and, unlike Singapore, the town clean and prettily laid out, while, unlike most Oriental towns, it is singularly free from objectionable odours. Even the native quarter is fresh and wholesome. Had to race back to ship after a quick run round in jinrikshas. Sailed again at noon. A theatrical company came on board at Penang. Things liven up a bit and most of the passengers join in a dance on deck after dinner.



View from the E. & O. Hotel. Penang.

March, 6th.—Over 2,000 Asiatics on board. They are a noisy, noisome lot and there is an infernal babel of tongues. The general confusion becomes more confounded when there is a free fight amongst sections of the different races, whose ways and religious susceptibilities clash very violently at times. They are a mystifying vortex of humanity to watch. The lower decks of the ship which are packed with a heterogeneous mass of humanity, huddled together in all manner of attitudes, seethe like maggots in a gorgonzola cheese.

Passed a few miles to the south of Nicobar Islands about 5 o'clock.

March, 7th.—Day commenced with an ugly quarrel amongst the Chinese and Sikhs on the after-lower deck. Whilst at breakfast there were several shrill blasts on a whistle, and the noise of great confusion outside which rather startled everyone. The Captain and chief officer went out to restore order. The cause of the tumult was a free fight between the Sikhs and Chinese and one of the Sikhs and one of the Chinamen were very badly injured in the fray.

The latter had a terrible gash on his forehead, in which the doctor put about a dozen stitches, and several long ugly wounds about the body. The Sikh was in a still worse plight and it was evident from his injuries that they had both struck to kill.

As a result of the fracas, the Chinese have declared a vendetta on the Sikhs and the officers of the ship are apprehensive of more trouble.

Won the first prize of the sweep, thus spoiling an excellent record in never having won anything by chance before in my life. But it's never too late to mend.

March, 8th.—Busy morning running the sweep. The members of theatrical party on board help to keep things pretty merry. Dancing on deck every evening and night. My stable companion follows my example and wins first prize of the sweep.

March, 9th.—Arrived Madras about 3 o'clock in the afternoon exactly ten weeks, almost to the minute, from the time of leaving the Thames on December 29th. Went to the theatre in the evening to give our friends of the theatrical party as cordial a reception as possible on making their debut in India.

April, 12th.—Left Madras at 5 o'clock in the evening after remaining there just on five weeks. The following random notes may serve to convey some idea of my first impressions of the Southern Presidency city.

V.

BACK IN INDIA.

SINS OF OMISSION OF THE CINDERELLA CITY.

ARRIVING at the "back door of India", after many varied and pleasant experiences in such delightful places as Cape Town, Durban, Singapore and Penang, the impartial stranger is not likely to be very favourably impressed with the reception he is accorded on stepping ashore in the benighted Presidency. Madras reminds one of those peculiarly constituted people that "wont grow up," or might be likened to one of those human freaks who are all extremities and no body to speak of. It has very little fundamental base to kick ; it is extremely scraggy and lean as a whole, but like Katisha it has its points, and its left shoulder blade might be described as a masterpiece of beauty. If the physical attributes of Madras, as one of the show cities of India, do not permit it putting on too much side, its Marina certainly entitles it to put on a pretty bold "front." It is rather reminiscent of a shoddily-dressed excursionist whose chief adornment is an expansive dicky set off with a large gem of the first water.

Certainly the Southern Presidency town improves on acquaintance, and those who ought to know swear by its charms and attractions as a residential elysium, compared with which Bombay and Calcutta with their Oriental swank and splendour, dirt, dust and "dough", are cheap and unreal by comparison. The Madras European citizen may be a keen patriot but not a very pronounced publicist, and his ideas of the social amenities of life are confined within a very limited and somewhat exclusive circle, but friendships are possibly warmer and more abiding affairs than in the other two sister Presidency towns.

What impressed me most on landing at Madras was the surprising lack of preparation and hopelessly inadequate facilities for meeting the requirements of passengers arriving by sea. The steamer and landing quay presented a pandemonium of scrimmaging humanity mixed up with coolies, luggage and an extensive assortment of merchandise. Vehicles are certainly not as plentiful as Vakils in Madras, and there is a tired and decrepit aspect about those—the vehicles not the vakils—which do ply for hire that is also reminiscent of the time-worn and fossilized institutions of the law. After vainly waiting some hours for a motor-car or gharry, I was trundled off in a dirty, dilapidated hand-cart, known locally as a ricksha. During a drive half-way down the coast, as it seemed to me,

past the historic Fort of St. George, and around about the surrounding country, I eventually arrived, well shaken and warmed up, at an hotel, doubtless of Hibernian extraction, judging by its name. In a truly filial spirit of emulation, the hotel has been planned on expansive proportions similar to those of the City. So much so, that to get from your bedroom to the dining-hall was quite a pleasant stroll before breakfast, made one hungrier at lunch-time and gave quite an appetizing fillip to the jaded diner at night. Later, when he had got back to bed, he possibly realised that Madras was a city of *some* distances, and, having turned over, fell to dreaming of a modern miracle—the Madraswallah who invented an up-to-date pair of Six-League Boots.

What the maidan is to Calcutta ; Back Bay and Malabar Hill are to Bombay ; the Galle Face is to Colombo, the Marina is to Madras. It is a fine imposing sea front with a couple of miles or so of broad, airy promenade, bordered near the beach with shrubs and flower-beds and a background of big buildings, designed in the best Oriental style. One or two of the latter, however, struck me as being rather after the modern factory type of structure, but what they were deficient in beauty, they made up for in bulk.

The Marina is an airing ground of magnificent proportions, as open and capacious as the promenade at Brighton, with the additional charm of

a splendid deep foreshore of fine golden sand. It struck me as being somewhat singular that a situation with all these advantages had not been selected as the site for an hotel, similar to the Galle Face in Colombo, or the Taj Mahal in Bombay. Both the latter have charming marine prospects, and here is Madras which might in many respects outvie either, apparently oblivious to the fact. Surely, in the City of Distances, the reason an hotel has not already been built on the Marina is not because it is too far from the business or residential ends of the town?

Madras is essentially a city where quick locomotion is indispensable, and the motor-car is Madras' best friend. A motor spin along the Marina in the evening is the finest *aperitif* one can take before dinner, although I have heard of some appetizers that are shorter and more stimulating. Still the Marina must work miracles on the jaded appetites of the sun-dried denizens of George Town, where the money-spider spins his web.

Justice was ever one of the brightest beacons of mankind and there is a happy selection, as well as an illuminating symbolism, in the combination of a High Court, the central dome of which serves as a light-house. In this respect, Madras affords a rather unique example, and if the light of the law, which emanates from the Courts beneath, is as clear and penetrating as the beam which guides the mariner

from the dome above, things should not be so benighted in the Presidency of Madras as one has been led to suppose.

The Madras High Court bears some honourable scars of the great War. In fact, Madras has the distinction—which is not without some incentive of pride—of being one of the only ports east of Suez which was bombarded, excluding Kiauchau, Farther East. It will not readily forget the visit of the *Emden*, and in this respect it is the only place in India which has experienced a real live thrill during the progress of the world's greatest conflict. The only other port in these waters which had a similar actual experience of the reality of the war, was Penang, where the *Emden* blew up a Russian cruiser and sank a destroyer or two, but this was not so thrilling an adventure to the inhabitants as a bombardment.

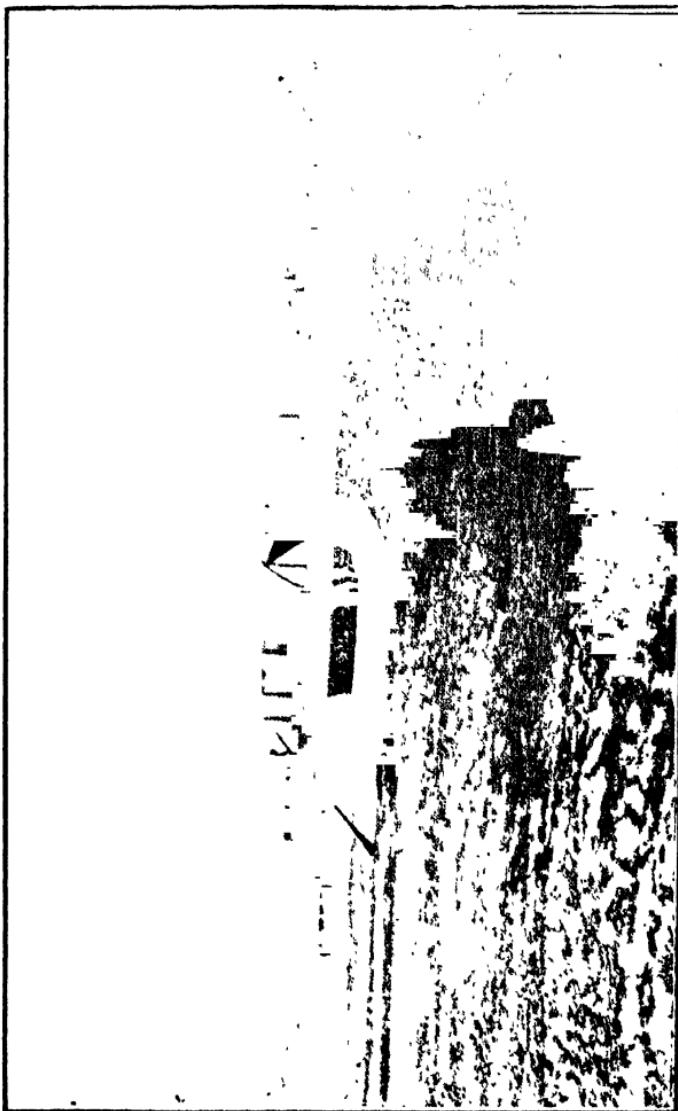
VI.

CALCUTTA REVISITED AFTER TWO DECADES.

IT was Sunday morning when I arrived in Calcutta and put up at the Great Eastern Hotel, improved and modernised during my many years absence almost out of recognition. Many changes can happen in 20 years, and in a progressive city like Calcutta I was prepared to be agreeably surprised in this direction, but the metamorphosis of Chowringhee and Clive Street, which are undoubtedly the most striking features of the newer parts of the more modern City of Palaces, was not a little amazing. I was aware of the existence of several new palatial blocks of buildings, like the Esplanade and Chowringhee Mansions, but such imposing and immense structures as those which now immediately arrest the eye in Chowringhee and Clive Street were a revelation to me.

In a commercial sense, Calcutta's advance appeared to me to have been equally rapid and surprising, and the Bengali has probably learnt and assimilated more western ideas in the past 10 or 15 years than during the whole period of the British connection with India. The Bengali merchant and tradesman were beginning to show real enterprise, and no-

The Gondola of the River Hooghly.



where in the East will the traveller be more impressed with the immensity and luxuriousness of the shops, or discover any more essentially British in character than those in Old Court House Street and Chowringhee. Calcutta, in fact, has a more European aspect about it than any other city in the East, and in those great essentials which go to make a fine, up-to-date and progressive City, it can give its Western Presidency sister city a long start and a lot of beating. It is a cleaner, better regulated, more efficiently organized and outwardly, at any rate, appears to be a much more prosperous city than Bombay. If not quite so picturesque, the appearance of the poorer class of inhabitants is of a much higher standard in Calcutta than on the Western side and of a very advanced and pleasing type compared with the same community in the Southern Presidency city, which is extremely backward and retarded by the reactionary influence of the Brahmin element. One encounters more mendicancy, squalid poverty, disease and fetishism in Madras than in any other part of India, and it is here one comes in contact with the most primitive customs and conditions of life in this most paradoxical of primitive countries.

In this connection, if I may be pardoned the digression, I should like to refer in passing to an extremely entertaining and instructive book on India (*Indian Studies*) and its peoples, written by

General Sir O'Moore Creagh. The author, who knows his India intimately, makes a telling indictment against the more educated but unproductive classes of India. We all know that India is the most usurious and litigious country in the world and the former Commander-in-chief of India is a veteran soldier who loves and admires the sturdy fighting races of India and proportionately dislikes and distrusts the classes which ruin these races with usury and litigation. For the writer-classes and the Brahmins, the Scribes and Pharisees of India, he has only contempt and aversion.

There are one of two pertinent questions in General Sir O'Moore Creagh's book which also have a significant bearing on the new India reform scheme :—"The Montague-Chelmsford Report," he remarks, "does not allude to the question of language, which is a strange omission. It is a question which exercises a very important influence on the political situation not only in India but all the world over". Mr. Montague thinks that "the features of caste which make it impossible to regard India as a democratic nation might, with the flow of time, disappear". The furious controversy over Mr. Patel's Marriage Bill is enough to prove that Mr. Montague has a great deal to learn about caste, of which there is throughout the country 2,400 divisions or subsections, all inimical to one another, speaking many different languages and made up of some 45 differ-

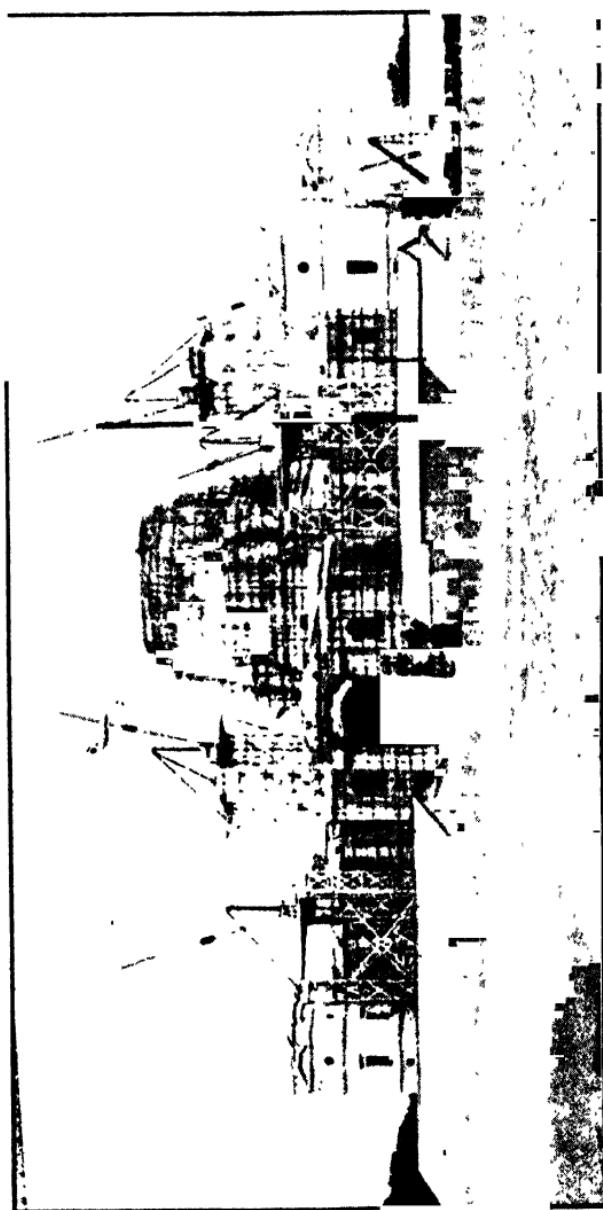


Photo by

India's Valhalla: The Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta is now nearing completion. The foundation stone was laid by the King-Emperor then Prince of Wales, during his visit to India in 1903. At the Town Hall meeting in February, 1901, at which the monument was decided upon Lord Curzon having passed in review the claims of other historic cities, such as Bombay, Delhi, Agra and Madras, said 'I think that Calcutta should be the site. It is said that we are rather out of the way. Perhaps we are and yet, sooner or later, just because this is the seat of Government,

H. deB. Goldsmith

rent races, of whom the promoters of the Montague-Chelmsford scheme, remarks Sir O'Moore Creagh, "know very little, as is amply shown by the fact that they treat this heterogeneous mass as one nation."

CALCUTTA'S CROWNING GLORY.

Calcutta's crowning glory is the maidan, a fine open, well-wooded piece of country intersected with fine roads. Of these the most imposing is the Red Road, which is somewhat reminiscent of the Mall in St. James' Park. The Maidan is the great charm of the City of Palaces, and is bounded on the river side by Fort St. William. The latter historic citadel, together with Fort St. George, Madras, form two interesting links with the chief centres of the inception of British rule in India.

Since my previous visit to Calcutta, I was pleased to observe many striking changes in the Maidan, due largely, I believe, to Lord Curzon's initiative. The old tank at the Esplanade end had been filled in and the whole of the lower end of the Maidan, extending almost as far as the Ochterlony Monument, laid out as a landscape garden.

Curzon has left the imprint of his forceful genius indelibly stamped on the lineaments of the newer and more picturesque Calcutta, which is gradually being evolved from the chaotic internal economy of the old order of things. India's Valhalla, sometime

known as Curzon's Folly, even in the half-finished state it is now, forms a colossal pile of white marble which stands out in bold relief on one of the most charming parts of the Maidan, contiguous to the Cathedral, and is destined to completely transfigure and beatify the old sordid precincts of the Presidency Jail that formerly stood, and remnants of which still remain standing, hard by. Facing this imposing Temple of Fame, there has arisen within late years a grandiose statue to the great Nathaniel, who, attired in Court robes, stands erect in one of his best imperialistic poses.

If there is one thing which Calcutta prides itself on more than another, it is its fine Race-course, situated at the Kidderpore end of the spacious Maidan and within five minutes motor-taxi drive of Chowringhee, which may be considered the hub of the city. The big meeting synchronizes with the X'mas festivities, and the Viceroy's Cup, which is run on Boxing Day and is one of the big social events of the year, attracts one of the most fashionable assemblies to be seen anywhere on a race-course, possibly, not excluding Ascot itself. This year's racing season (1918-1919) was a memorable one by reason of the fact that it coincided with the Victory Celebrations, and also owing to the fact that the same horse (Dark Legend) won both the big events, carrying off the two most

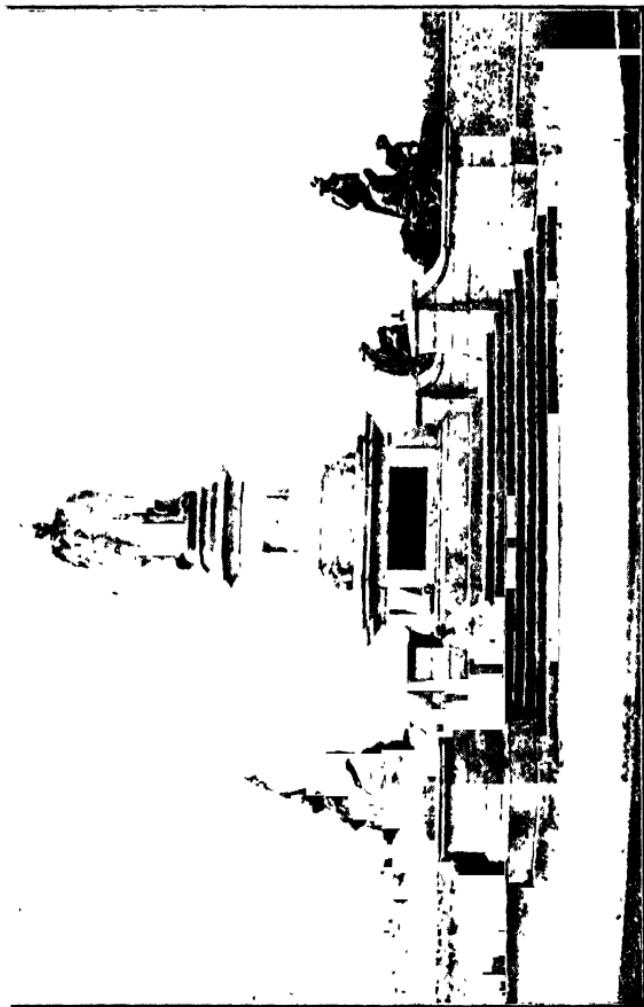


Photo by

R. deB. Goldsmith
The Curzon Statue facing the main entrance to the Victoria Memorial Hall... The proposal to erect an All-India memorial to the great Queen emanated from Lord Curzon, and was decided upon as far back as 1901. Many people have despaired of the structure ever being finished but it is now within measurable reach of completion.

coveted prizes of the Turf in the East, namely the Viceroy's and King-Emperor's Cups.

Calcutta's climate for at least three months of the year is distinctly genial, except that the night atmosphere during the month of December and January is very hazy and imparts a clammy chilliness to the air which is rather unpleasant and not, I should imagine, particularly healthy. There is a marked difference between the cold weather on this side of India and that which the sun-scorched denizens of the Western Presidency are accustomed to about this time of the year as a relief from the steamy heat which follows the monsoon. Bombay's cold season is a delusion and a snare. There is very little perceptible change in the temperature, except during the night, but in Calcutta one experiences a distinct bite in the air, and about midnight a damp, clammy haze hangs over the Maidan that almost steals into one's bones. There is no need of electric fans at any time for at least a couple of months during the cold season. The days are pleasantly cool and in the early morning, one purposely seeks the sunny-side of the road. To roll up in bed at night in a quilt induces a soporific feeling of luxurious comfort which is uncommonly like the real thing one experiences in the autumn nights at home, and in the morning one does not linger too long drying oneself after the matutinal tub. The sahibs go

abroad in the evening with overcoats, which would do credit to Bond Street in pre-war times, and muffled up almost to the eye-brows with neck-clothes, while the fair sex make a brave show in their furs, and the white leopard skin graces the shoulders of many a comely matron and pretty maid. But there is more imagination about this cold-weather custom on the Calcutta side than real necessity. "It's a bit of Calcutta swank," as a recent visitor from the more temperate zones remarked to me when he observed a lady walking down Court House Street with a display of furs which would not have been amiss for a cold day in Moscow.

The Calcutta Improvement Trust are gradually Hausmannizing the City, if one may judge by the radical changes which are now approaching completion in Bhowanipur, where a fine new avenue has been driven through the colony of *basties* that previously existed, and there is now a broad continuous boulevard from Chowringhee to Tolly-gunge, a distance of about four miles.

VII.

PLEASANTRIES ON PATNA.

PROBABLY one of Lord Hardinge's greatest claims to fame during his administration in India is the unhappy genius he displayed as a Town-planner. In this department he completely out distanced his great architectural compeer and predecessor, Lord Curzon, whose artistic tastes in this direction were principally confined to creating India's Valhalla—the Victoria Memorial Hall in Calcutta, which is still unfinished,—and restoring and preserving the ancient monuments of India. Started under the regime of Lord Hardinge, the new city of Patna has arrived at a similar desolate stage of semi-completion as the new capital of Delhi. It has a lone, lorn appearance. There is an air of melancholy isolation about the colony of squat rows of detached, model-dwellings, and an aggressive feeling of superior aloofness about the three main architectural landmarks, the High Court, the new Secretariat, and the Post Office. The internal calm and dignified quiescence of these buildings suggest the same air of detachment and makes one wonder whether Patna has any relation to anything or anybody except Blue-books, red-tape

and sealing-wax, and parchment and law tomes. In solitary state, Lord Hardinge's effigy in marble presides over this desolate Eden, and it is monarch of all it surveys.

The generative forces of Patna seem to be concentrated in and around Exhibition Road, where there is a colony of bungalows, all of which stand in spacious grounds, and in these the minions of the law take their ease when not engaged on forensic exercises. This part of Patna rather reminded me of a similar judicial retreat at Madras called the Luz. The Luz at Madras simply scintillates with legal luminaries of varying degrees of lustre, and it is also the great stronghold of the political forces of Brahminism in the south. One observes the same sort of elements in Exhibition Road at Patna, and a little more extensive knowledge of India impresses one with the realization of the countless number of people that thrive in this litigious land on the unproductive resources of the law.

Patna High Court is the Tom Tiddler's ground of Orissa and Bihar, and, although larger, is an exact replica of Allahabad's palace of justice. To be more precise, it may be more correct to say the High Court at Allahabad is an exact replica of the Patna model. Anyhow, the latter forms the preponderating, if not the most imposing factor of the present nucleus of the new capital. Situated

on the sacred river Ganges, the city of Patna is one of the oldest cities of India founded in the 5th century, B. C., and embraces the civil station of Bankipore and the military cantonment of Dinapore.

THE FAMINE FREAK.

One of the most prominent landmarks of Bankipore is a curiously shaped structure which, owing to its rotund proportions and commanding height, immediately arrests one's attention. Seen from a distance, it looks like an enormous mound of earth, but on closer inspection is discovered to be a sort of freak building in the shape of a beehive, with two flights of spiral stone steps leading to the top. It is a curious relic of antiquity and has an interesting history. It was completed in 1786 as a store house for grain, being one of the earliest measures adopted by Government to provide for the populace in times of famines. The original intention appears to have been to erect a number of such granaries throughout the province in which grain might be stored in years of plenty as provision against recurring periods of scarcity, or in the more emphatic phraseology of the marble tablet over one of the four doors which pierce the 12 feet thick walls on each side : "for the perpetual prevention of famine in these provinces." But, as we know by long tradition, "the best laid schemes of

mice and men gang aft agley," and the Gola, as the granary is known locally, still stands as a hollow monument which has never been filled with anything more substantial than the memories and echoes of the past, and there are few echoes so substantial as those which can be produced inside the Gola. To stand inside in inky blackness with the door closed, is eerie enough, but the slightest movement or sound reverberates a thousand-fold and has a truly startling effect. This remarkable building is also famous by reason of a daring equestrian feat which was once performed by Maharaja Sir Jung Bahadur, Prime Minister and Marshal of Nepal, who demonstrated his prowess as a horseman by riding his favourite Arab steed up the stone stairway to the top of the structure and down again.

VIII.

THE DAK BUNGALOW.

W^OE betide the unhappy traveller if has to remain long in Patna, and has to depend upon the *Dak* Bungalow to administer to his material comforts. The drawbacks of travel in India are many, but apart from dust, mosquitoes, and beggars and other parasitical torments, one of the sorest afflictions the average wayfarer encounters is the *Dak* Bungalow. Why these necessary institutions should be such appalling places, badly built, and inefficiently run, it is difficult to understand, and it is rather surprising that the representatives of the commercial houses, who frequently have to use them, do not make some effective protest against the existing state of affairs in connection with the upkeep and regulations controlling rest-houses in India. There may be worse places for the jaded traveller to crawl into than Bankipore *Dak* Bungalow, but they would need a bit of finding. To say the place is infested with mosquitoes, is conveying a very inadequate idea of the infernal hum myriad hosts of these horrible pests create after sun-down. The foisty air of these fearful dungeons, where one ineffectually tries to woo Nature's sweet restorer,

literally vibrates with them, and they attack in squadron formation. I found one victim who had been waylaid on his first visit to Patna taking refuge in the refreshment room of the railway station. He had arrived late at night at the *Dak* Bungalow without a mosquito curtain and had suffered the tortures of the damned for an hour trying to sleep on a hard stretcher amid the sepulchral surroundings of the Mecca of Mosquitoes. Finally, he retreated on to the verandah with a bottle of whisky to pray for dawn. His benediction on Patna was full of purple patches.

Unfortunately, I had to remain some days at Patna, but by retiring early at night and sealing myself up in a mosquito-proof curtain, I managed to keep the tormentors at bay. On the fourth day my attention was drawn by the *Khitmutgar* (head butler, though what he butled in particular I was unable to discover, unless it was his own *khana*) to a notice posted up in the entrance of the bungalow informing whomsoever it might concern that the accommodation of the *Dak* Bungalow had been reserved for two days for the unofficial members of the Legislative Council which was having a periodical pow-wow at Patna. So I had to quit! I did so with the painful reflection that the *unofficial* are not blest in the Land of the *burra* official Moloch.

But worse experiences than those related above

may befall the unwary guest who has to put up at a *Dak* Bungalow. In the first place, he is not entitled to more than 24 hours' sanctuary, for which he pays the fixed tariff of one rupee, plus the *Khitmutgar's* charges, for which there is no settled scale, for entertainment, provided the hapless visitor has got to fall back on *Dak* fare as a last resource. In the event of no other room being vacant, the next arrival can turn out the man who has been in the bungalow for the longest period, if it extends over the 24 hours. A friend of mine was turned out at the bewitching hour of 3 A. M. (he had been in the Bungalow some days) in order to make way for a newcomer who insisted on the observance of the 24 hours limit. The man in possession reluctantly evacuated the condemned cell, but by the time he had packed up his traps, shaved and given the "all clear," it was something like 6 A. M. Thirsting for revenge, he laid in ambush, so to speak, a couple of days and turning up at the *Dak* Bungalow at the same unearthly hour in the morning got the evictor ejected in a similar manner. There is no knowing when these Box and Cox reprisals might have terminated, had the *Dak* Bungalow not been involved during the following night in a flood which inundated the locality and evicted everyone, except the mosquitoes, who, my friend assured me, got on swimmingly.

IX.

IMPRESSIONS BY THE WAY.

FROM Patna to Gya, the Holy Land of Buddhists, is a mere stride as distances go in India, and if anyone wants to gaze on the remnants of a decadent and dilapidated city of the first magnitude, a visit to Gya should satisfy the most morbid taste in this direction. There is no doubt an age of sanctity and archaic association clinging to it, like ivy round a ruin, but what impressed me most about Gya was the appalling dirtiness of the place, and the utter state of decay and neglect into which the whole city had fallen. Cleanliness is said to be next to Godliness, but in India the converse seems to be the rule, and sanctity would appear to be synonymous for dirt, decay and disease. Where these conditions are most predominant, the Fakir, or religious mendicant, thrives amongst his mud and ashes in his most luxuriant state. It is facetiously said that the Bengalee Babu and mosquitoes are the curse of India, but I should imagine a combination really deserving the distinction would be : *Bucksheesh* and Fakirs.

The military station of Dinapore, and Arrah with its mutiny memories, celebrated in particular



A Fakir on his bed of spikes.

for the famous defence against the Mutineers in 1857, and the valiant stand by a small garrison commanded by Vicars Boyle, an engineer of the East Indian Railway, are mildly interesting, but my visits to these places were fleeting ones, and returning to Patna, I proceeded by ferry-steamer across the sacred Ganges, and had my first real experience of the terrors of travelling on narrow gauge railways in India. The trip for a short distance up the Ganges was cool and refreshing and I almost imagined I was on one of the Thames paddle-steamers going down to Margate. The water in the Ganges was decidedly low. I ascertained that this was not only due to the previous season's poor rainfall, but to the draining of the mighty river by the new canals which had been excavated further up towards its source. This seriously perturbed the Hindus, I was told, as they feared that the river would become so low that a pig might cross from bank to bank and then the sacred stream would lose its sanctity.

The most striking feature of Chupra, appeared to be the high wall of the Jail which adorned the centre of the town, and I found the railway refreshment room at Muzaffarpur quite entertaining after a hot, dusty and tedious railway journey. Looking from the refreshment room, the visitor can obtain a satisfying view of the town, and the *Dak* Bungalow, and the inevitable District Court in the offing.

Travelling on narrow gauge railways reminded me of many funny stories I had heard of the leisurely fashion in which some lines are conducted, and I found there was a remarkable spirit of give and take between the passengers and the railway officials on the railway in question. If anyone happened to fall out of a carriage, and we discovered it before the defaulting passenger overtook us, we courteously backed the train a mile or so and took the truant on board again.

One morning an Indian woman overbalanced herself in the excitement of playing a game of cards and toppled out of a crowded third-class compartment, dropping on to the footway of the line just on the right side of a deep nullah, over which there was a bridge we had just traversed. There was a timely alarm, and everybody got out of the train and rushed to the rescue. They found the woman, somewhat dishevelled and bleeding, busily intent searching in the ballast on the line for the missing ace of a good nap hand. By the time we had backed half a mile, and got her on board, half the other passengers were also missing on a quest for *pan* and *pani* at a neighbouring village.

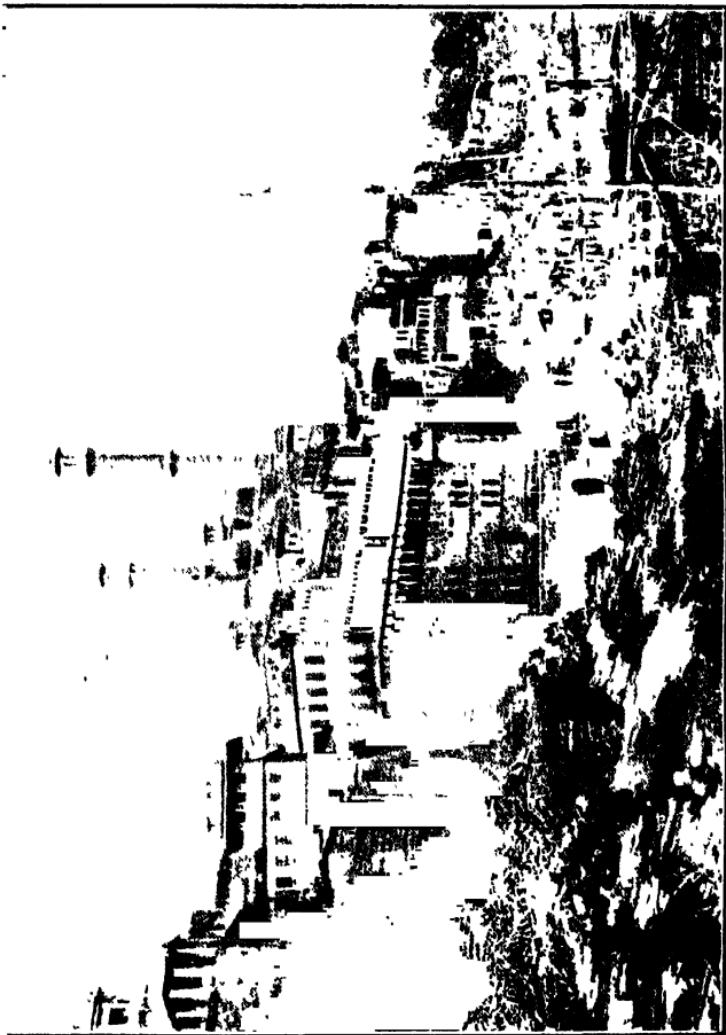
Darbhanga may be a nice province to visit when flying becomes more popular in India, but my visit by rail was hardly a phenomenal success. Landing at Laheria Serai after dark, my welcome at the *Dak* Bungalow was not what might be termed

enthusiastic. I was a sort of odd man out, and of all my *Dak* Bungalow experiences, Laheria Sarai supplied the most memorable note, the poignant anguish of which will not fade with years. I had just abandoned all hopes of ever getting off narrow gauge railways, when I met a good Samaritan, who advised me to make the nearest tracks for the river and to get on to the main line at Mokameh Ghaut. I had a feeling as though I had been in a German internment camp for quite a long time. I was so elated about getting on board the river steamer again, and having a decent dinner once more, that when I woke up next morning I found myself in the train at Moghal Serai station. Having to change trains, I had breakfast at the Junction, and arrived at Benares a few hours later.

X.

THE ATHENS OF THE EAST.

IT may be considered as something in the nature of a vandalistic admission to record the fact that my first impression of Benares, viewed from the unstable security of a Ganges river-boat, was rather suggestive of a bit of old Wapping in an unusual setting of vivid colouring. The approach to the river-side from the Cantonment was also somewhat reminiscent of the Ratcliffe Highway on the occasion of a Hobson-Jobson festival. I had often conjured up Benares, in my mind's eye. I was quite prepared to see a lot of temples—there are 1,500 Hindu temples and nearly 300 Mahomedan mosques—and narrow devious streets winding up stairways from the river's edge, and plenty of Fakirs lying prone on beds spiked with tenpenny nails, but I had not pictured anything so unique as the chaotic mass of temples, ruins, towering buildings, the most conspicuous of which is the big mosque with two slender minarets poised high above everything else, and the weird motley mass of animate and inanimate objects which the actual scene presents. Viewed from a coign of vantage on the river bank near the Observatory, the first



A view of Benares from the river front.

thing about Benares that riveted my attention was the perplexing variety of the scene and the quick transition from stone-yards, timber dumps, crazy river-craft, and the paraphernalia of native commerce, to temples and shrines ; from the ponderous palaces of princes--some of which had bodily collapsed into the river, while others seemed in imminent danger of following their example--to squalid shops and *bustees*, and the rostrums with mushroom-shaped canopies dotted about the ghauts where holy men squatted underneath in the shade begging alms. All this, together with a bewildering medley of life and colour, combined in making a scene as fantastic and variegated as the rapidly-changing patterns of a Kaleidoscope.

Like Gya, the Holy Land of the Buddhists, the forces of disintegration through neglect and decay, as well as a philosophy which raises temples on foundations of sand, had laid their devastating hand on Benares, and huge portions of the river bank, bearing away massive stone structures had slid bodily into the sacred river, where for years the ruins have remained undisturbed. It only appears to be a question of time for the landslide to complete the ruin, until the whole of the river bank with its serried tiers of bricks and mortar, like castles built of playing cards, meets a similar fate. But frantic efforts are now being made to stop up the ominous fissures in the foundations of some

was held by the Rebels, and where the hottest fighting occurred, are all objects of absorbing interest. And even the story of the siege retold by the old soldier guide stirs the blood with an exalting feeling of admiration and pride. I spent some of my most enjoyable hours in Lucknow roaming round the beautiful, well-kept grounds of the Residency, and whenever I drove by the river-side my eyes turned involuntarily, as if by some hypnotic influence, to the old shot-scarred Tower with its tattered Union Jack fluttering bravely in the breeze.

"Does that flag always remain there?", I had asked the old guide. "Yes!" he said, "day and night; it is only pulled down when we put a new one up."

Whenever I saw it afterwards, I was reminded of the words of the song :--

Here's to the Flag we love,
That floats o'er the land and sea
And here's to each heart,
That has borne its own part,
For land of the Brave and Free.

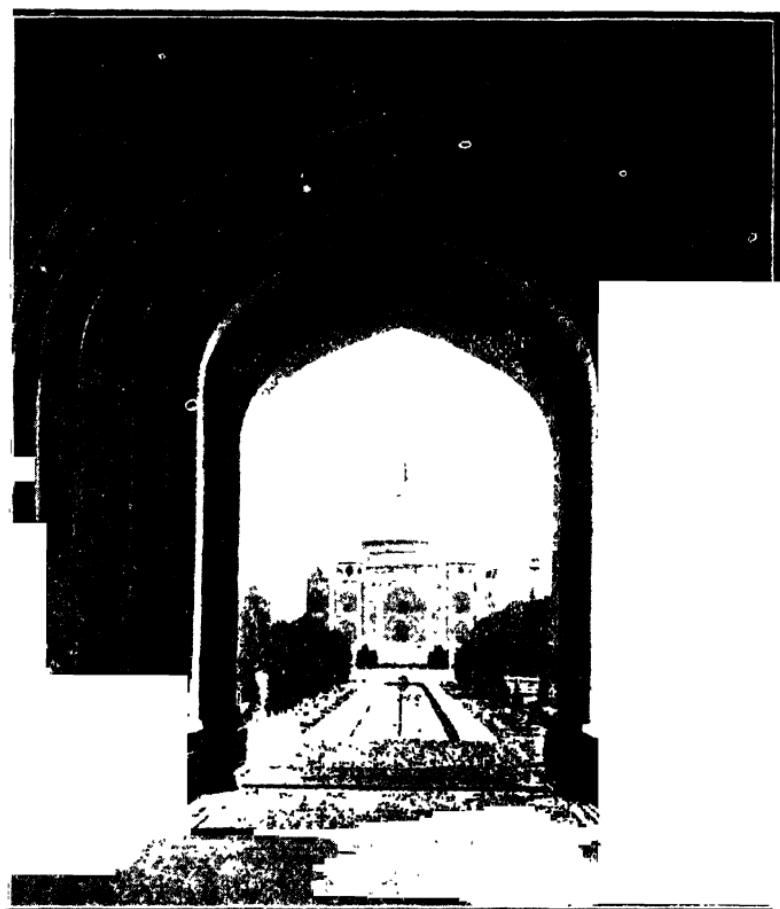


Photo by

Bourne & Shepherd

A charming vista of the Taj Mahal.

XII.

A DREAM IN MARBLE.

AGRA, said Lord Curzon in the course of a speech on one occasion, "is consecrated to a vanished dynasty and *regime*; while it is now too late—I sometimes wish it were not!—to turn Delhi again into an imperial capital."

In the light of what has since transpired, these words have a rather peculiar interest. But of Delhi, more anon. It is to Agra, the great Moghal stronghold with its magnificent Fort and the immaculate Taj Mahal, one of the most superb pieces of architecture in the world, that I would pay a humble tribute in passing. Agra shorn of the Taj and Fort would be like the figure 9 with the tail cut off. It is a typical Indian cantonment city, flat and scattered, and in parts wild and desolate-looking, while the native quarter is appallingly dirty, dilapidated and forbidding.

No picture can visualise, nor pen describe, the incomparable beauty of this "dream in marble," as the Taj Mahal has been poetically described. I was prepared to be mightily impressed by what I should behold, but my pleasure at the realisation of a scene, with which by illustration and repute I was so

familiar, far exceeded my fondest expectations. The Fort and the Taj convey something of the appositeness of the saying that "the Moghals designed like Titans and finished like jewellers". The mausoleum which Shah Jehan, the king of royal designers and architects, erected to the cherished memory of his wife was commenced in 1630 and completed in 1648, and is described as representing "the most highly elaborated stage of ornamentation—the stage at which the architect ends and the jeweller begins." Viewed from the Jasmine Tower of the Fort when the river is in full flood, the Taj is like some fairy creation suspended in air. The view is such an enchanting one that it is not difficult to conceive the peace and tranquillity of the last moments of Shah Jehan as he lay in the Jasmine Tower gazing on the tomb of his wife, by whose side he now lies.

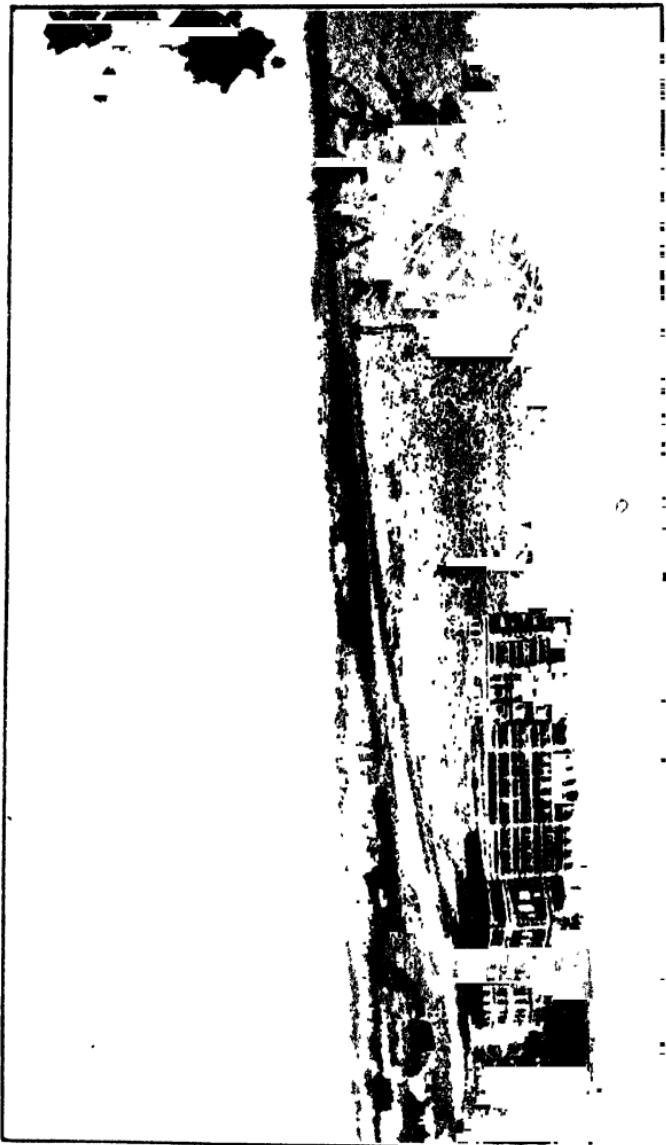
It is not my intention to attempt a description of the exquisite beauty of this glimpse of earthly paradise. I might try to impress you with the unreality of words ; I might endeavour to give you some slight conception of the infinite, but there in all its transcendental charm it stands, a monument to God's most glorious gift, a woman.

A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, to command ;
And yet a spirit still and bright,
With something of an angel light.

Photo by

H. G. Golson

View from Malabar Hill of Back Bay Bombay.



XIII.

THE CITY OF BEAUTIFUL RUMOUR.

BOMBAY is undoubtedly a more spectacular—some would say more picturesque—and in many respects a much more attractive and interesting city than Calcutta. Few cities have been more generously endowed by Nature in individual charms, but like a good many beautiful children it has not grown up so perfect as might have been expected. It has now arrived at a stage of overgrown adolescence, and shows painful signs of having anything but a robust constitution. Its principal complaint seems to be fatty degeneration, with a distinct tendency to a dropsical development. Like most vain young things, it has a weakness for fancy adornment, and a penchant for rather shoddy raiment, which is inclined to shrink in places and show the seamy side of things beneath.

Bombay is coquettish and at the same time sluttish. It rather reminds one of the beautiful creature who paints and powders her face, but never washes her neck and is not too particular about her underwear. My comparisons may be somewhat odious, but they are not inappropriate, and I protest I am no partisan to the jealousy

which exists as to the rival claims to supremacy of India's two premier cities. Neither would I wantonly wound Bombay's *amour propre*, but I feel constrained to add that if Calcutta's western sister really wants to become a real lady with a nice sense of the attributes which are essential to that proud distinction, she must change her ways.

No one can gainsay the fact that Bombay is greatly superior to Calcutta in point of view of its geographical situation, its beautiful marine prospect and fine natural harbour, or that it has other picturesque physical merits which are beyond comparison with her eastern sister's charms, when summing up the relative beauties of the two cities. What would Calcutta not give for the beautiful Bay which sweeps round in a magnificent curve from Malabar Hill to Colaba, with its splendid mariné drive that is non-existent at present but surely one day will materialise in accordance with Lord Sydenham's scheme, or who could be unresponsive to the lure of the seaside touch and the dusky sirens of Chowpatty Sea Face, and its beach dotted with fishing boats, and the *Bile-wallahs* bathing herds of bullocks in the surf. One could have preferred that the bathing might have been reserved for the dusky sirens, but Bombay was always more utilitarian in these matters than conspicuous for its appreciation of the æsthetic. Some advance the theory that this is chiefly due

to the fact that the Parsees, who constitute such a large proportion of Bombay's population, have no æsthetic sense, but personally I think this is another libel on an enterprising and thriving section of the community who have picked out most of the tits-bits in the way of beauty spots of Bombay as their own preserves. On the contrary, the Parsee has a very keen artistic sense, also a nice appreciation of the distinction between *meum et tuum*. In this respect he usually gets there first and stays there.

Reverting to my original point, Bombay has many similar assets of transcendental grace, and charm. There is the beautiful acropolis of the Parsees on Malabar Hill, and the Towers of Silence with its ornamental palm groves decorated with vultures, waiting ever for the Parsees coming to the pinnacle of mundane affairs. There is the salubrious drive to that same delectable eminence along Queen's Road, which affords us another striking reminder of the transience of all earthly things by the convenient situation of the commodious burning ground with its high-wall and lugubrious gateways, adjacent to Marine Lines. There is also the railway running alongside. This adds additional zest to the evening's drive, as it is very often possible to strike one of the passengers, who has just alighted from the train and stepped quickly into the street (which has no pavement) going the same

way home. It is only a few weeks since a native motor-car driver, who must have been a bit of an expert, bagged six pedestrians in as many minutes. Since then he seems to have retired on his laurels, and the police are wondering why.

Of the Apollo Bunder*, the Oval, architectually adorned by the High Court, the Rajabhai Tower, and the Secretariat; the Bandstand, and Colaba Reclamation, it is not necessary to say more than that they constitute the coolest, most salubrious and prettiest spots in the Fort. To stand on the Oval about 7 o'clock in the evening and watch the sun dip over Malabar Hill, while allowing the vision to take in the sweep of the bay fringed with palms silhouetted against the glowing sunset, is to know how really beautiful Bombay can be in her best moods.

THE COSMOPOLITAN CITY.

There are few more cosmopolitan and typically Oriental cities than Bombay, but its most kaleido-

* Since the accompanying photograph of the Bombay Harbour was taken, the Apollo Bunder, or Gateway of India, has undergone some remarkable improvements. The Bunder head has been nearly doubled in size by the reclamation of a large portion of the harbour, which forms the recess in the forefront of the picture on the opposite page. The old pavilion on the Bunder head, also shown in the photograph, was removed many years ago, also the shed which formed part of the early establishment known as Green's Restaurant. The Apollo Bunder has been greatly enlarged and improved in contour, with the object of building an imposing marble structure embodying the sign and symbol of the Gateway of India, and commemorating the visit of the present King-Emperor in 1911. Lord Sydenham laid the foundation stone of the new Gateway some years ago.

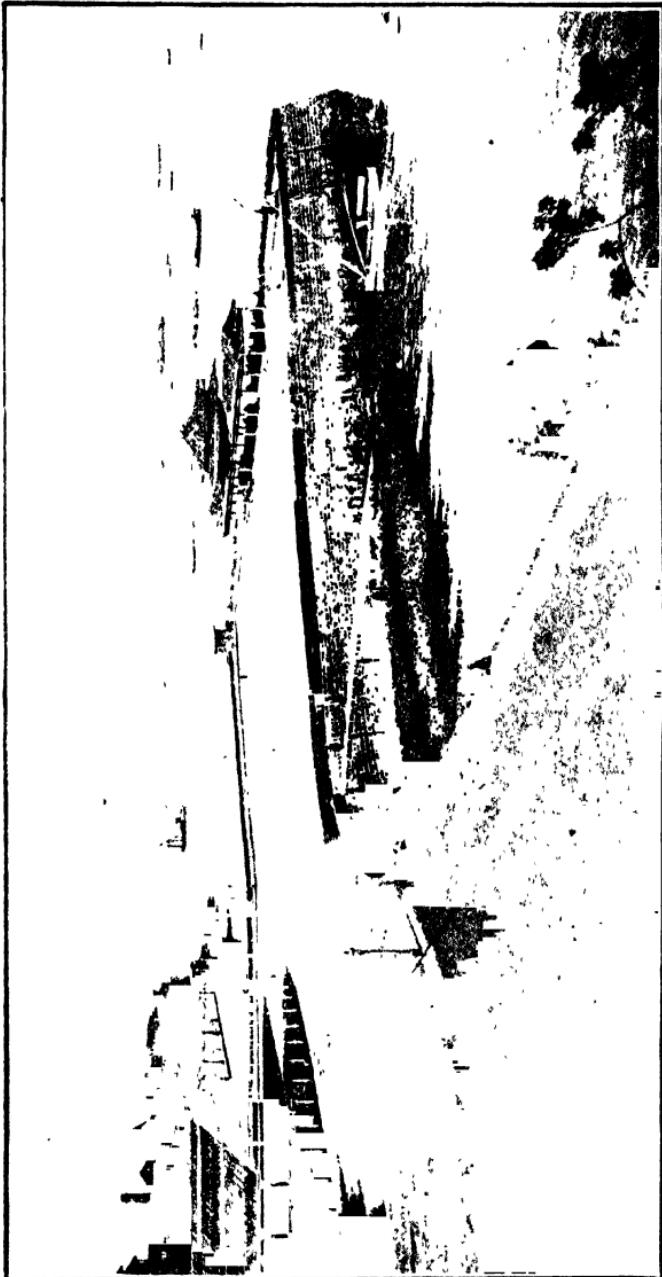


Photo by Bourne & Shepherd
The Apollo Bunder showing a view of Cambay Harbour with the Island of Elephanta and the mainland in the distance.

scopic and variegated phases of life lie beyond that particular part of the City designated the Fort. It is surprising how soon one can probe below its ornate surface and get at what constitutes the real substance of Bombay's composition. Any turning off Hornby Road between Church Gate Street and Victoria Terminus will give the explorer a truer idea of how Bombay lives than he can gather by many years' acquaintance with the more frequented confines of the Fort. To visit one of the human rookeries which lies obscured in those noisome, narrow gullies and back streets, is to understand something of the hygienic conditions under which the bulk of Bombay's population exists. A fair idea of the congested state of the city can be seen at a glance in passing along the railway between Byculla and Victoria Terminus. On either side of the line, covering almost every available inch of ground, are the same kind of towering tenement buildings, huddled together so closely and so densely crowded with people that there is little or no space for the ingress of light and air. Few of the people who live in the better residential quarters of the Fort realise, except in a very vague sort of way, the menace which these overcrowded and insanitary areas are to the health of the City.

Without swift and cheap electric traction to other parts of the island, such as Andheri, where there is plenty of room for expansion, Bombay's

housing problem will remain unsolved. The Improvement Trust up to now has done little or nothing to mitigate the danger. In fact, it has in a measure aggravated it by opening certain slum districts in order to make new thoroughfares like Princess Street, and by so doing has driven the evicted people into more congested areas. How many of the fairly well-to-do class of Bombay's population are paying exorbitant rents for flats which are little better than barns or lofts perched up at the top of a building five or six storeys high? The lower floors of the premises are usually let as offices, and to get to the top one has to climb five or six flights of rickety stairs, which are not only dark and dirty, but wreak with the stench from the latrines provided for the offices, and which are rarely if ever properly cleaned out. I have been in tenement buildings in the Fort which it was necessary to enter with bated breath and a handkerchief held tight to the nostrils, warding off the more aggressive odours from the olfactory nerve. In these darksome dens, I have observed the only air space at the back, a small well of a few feet in diameter, choked and festooned with all kinds of domestic refuse.

This is no exaggerated story of the insanitary conditions under which even the better class of inhabitants live, and one can well imagine the pest holes in which the vast thousands of mill opera-

tives wallow in the heart of India's Cottonopolis. Recent revelations brought about by the Mill strike, and the cholera epidemic which supervened, as well as the terrible ravages of the influenza scourge, indubitably proved, if further proof were necessary, that Bombay is one of the worst plague spots, and disease-infected cities in the world.

Bombay's salvation will be somewhere within realization when such retrograde elements as the rapacity of the Landlord, the greed of the Mill-owner, the dividend-lust of the shareholder, and the activities of the mass of rascals who rig and manipulate the markets and gamble on differences, are effectually scotched, and cease to be the powerful factors in its economic and domestic affairs which they are to-day ; and also when Bombay has a less supine and more efficient and public-spirited municipal administration, untainted with the suspicion of vested interests. It is not a blasphemous thought to say that if God came to Bombay, he would do a mighty lot of pulling down and setting up again, and the slums are not the only Augean Stables he would cleanse.

XIV.

"THE GOD OF GREAT POWER."

WHEN I left Bombay early in May, the temperature owing to the great humidity, was something like the vaporous heat of a Turkish bath, which kept perspiring humanity in a perpetual state of "lather", except at night time when the sea breeze considerably cooled things down and made existence in the torrid island more bearable. Towards midnight, however, the breeze as a rule dies off and the nights in May are usually oppressively still and stiflingly hot. A journey of a few hours by rail from Bombay to Poona, and then by motor car to Mahableshwar, which is accomplished in about three hours, brings one to the top of the magnificent chain of mountains which rise abruptly from the flat Konkan to an elevation of 4,500 feet above sea level. Mahableshwar is the principal sanitorium of the Bombay Presidency and is situated on the summit of the great Sahyadri Range, or Western Ghauts. The hill top, which is densely wooded, and has a cool, equable temperature in the hot season, varying from 79° in the daytime to 65° at night, has a general elevation of 4,500 feet above sea level, rising at its highest point, the Sindola

Hill, to 4,700 feet. The mountain air is crisp and by comparison with the humid, enervating atmosphere of Bombay, quite invigorating. The sun is fairly hot in the middle of the day, yet quite pleasant, the mornings and evenings delightful, while the nights are never close or hot but are invariably cool and refreshing.

The crests of the numerous spurs, ridges and peaks, which rise one above another, are clothed in the richest verdure, and much of the scenery, a feature of which is an abundance of wild fern, resembles that of a beautiful English park. Certainly no other part of India affords such a charming substitute for our English summer climate and glorious sylvan scenery as does Mahableshwar. Parts of it reminded me, with joyous exultation, of Hampstead Heath, where every prospect pleases, and unfolds to the view at every turn of the path some new and fascinating feature of beauty. But Mahableshwar has many other attributes which induce the same pleasing deception. There is not only the verve and joy of an English summer in the morning air, and in the musical lilt of the birds, so unfamiliar to the plains, but there are real fresh strawberries and cream, and raspberries, too, to regale one at *Chota Hazri*. For four annas one purchases a fairly large tray of strawberries and although the berries are somewhat small in size, they are of excellent

flavour, and the vendors who ply them in the early morning seem to carry on a thriving trade.

The surroundings of Government House at Mahableshwar are particularly beautiful, the luxuriantly wooded peak on which the Governor's Bungalow nestles in seclusion, and the entrancing vistas of the road leading to it with its fern-covered banks on either side and leafy-bowers of overhanging foliage, give a touch of bewitching rustic charm which could only be equalled by some of the beauty spots in the heart of rural England itself.

It is close upon a century since the potentialities of Mahableshwar, then a most secluded and inaccessible mountain retreat, were first exploited as an ideal situation for the principal sanitorium and summer gubernatorial headquarters of the Bombay Presidency. However, it is only within comparatively recent years that the hill top has attained its present state of popularity and it is only recently that electric light was installed in Government House. Till then the only illuminant on the hill top was the objectionable oil *buttee*, and, with the exception mentioned, still obtains and renders the hotels and bungalows very dreary and darksome places at night-time.

Dotted all over the principal residential quarter of the hill-top are red-stone bungalows with corrugated iron roofs and the more pretentious

chateaux are usually those occupied by Parsees. Mahableshwar in the season is the resort *par excellence* of the Parsee, who is a *persona grata* amongst the immortals who have their habitat in these Olympian heights, and more or less rules the roost. But he abounds more at the lesser, if more popular, mountain elysium at Matheran, which is quite close to Bombay, and is sufficiently handy to enable one to spend a week-end there, although, being 2,000 feet lower, the climatic conditions are not nearly so attractive.

What strikes the casual visitor as being one of the most prodigious labours which have been wrought in opening up Mahableshwar and Panchgani, are its fine roadways which wind their way in zig-zag formation up the Wai Ghauts and for a distance of eight miles have been cut out of the precipitous slopes of the mountain side. On reaching the plateau, there is a straight run along a beautifully even red road of 12 miles to Mahableshwar, amidst the most delightful mountain scenery, and at the summit of the hill-top a network of roads and mountain paths leading to all the various points. One of the most attractive is Bombay Point, which is a popular rendezvous in the evening, and from which one can obtain a radiant glimpse of the sea, 40 miles away, as the sun sets. The view afforded by the vast ranges of mountains rising one behind the other, and that

of the mountain fortress of Purtabghar, one of the famous forts of the Maratha warrior Shivaji, enhanced by the exquisite colouring of the golden sunset, is one of awe-inspiring grandeur, but rather oppresses one with a feeling of peculiar desolation. It visualizes the meaning of the name Mahableshwar, "THE GOD OF GREAT POWER". It also gives one a startling idea of the infinite and the colossal conception of some of Nature's handiwork.

XV.

THE END OF AN IMPERFECT DAY.

IN order to relieve the tedium of life in the "sumptuous hollow," a descriptive sobriquet applied to the verdant basin, 4,500 feet above the sea level, in which Mahableshwar softly palpitates and has its being, I essayed to cycle to Panchgani, which lies 12 miles away at the summit of the Wai Ghaut. There is a pronounced aloofness between Mahableshwar and Panchgani, somewhat reminiscent of the relationship which exists between a prosperous suburban family, and their poor relatives. Still, Panchgani plumes itself on its beauty, its magnificent panoramic vistas of mountain ranges, the superb flat eminence known as Table Land, which makes an excellent lofty playground swept by the purest and freshest breezes, blowing alternately from every point of the compass. But there is a shabby-genteel air about its golf-course, and mean-looking Gymkhana which is in striking contrast to the Olympian retreat of the Mahableshwar Gymkhana, with its beautifully laid-out golf-links, racecourse and polo-ground, whilst the sharp distinction between the two health resorts is still more accentuated by the appearance of their respective

habitations, the bazar or shopping centres of either locality, and the spic-and-span embellishments of Mahableshwar generally in contradistinction to the *kutcha* exterior of Panchgani.

Both places are afflicted with a somnolence which is as profound as the mute eloquence of the mountain tops. The chief distractions of everyday life are golf and tennis, whilst those less fortunately circumstanced with regard to their daily recreations, ramble or drive about the beautifully wooded hill-top, making excursions to the various points, which command sweeping views of the plains below. What a contrast between the clear, cool, balmy air of these salubrious heights and the heavy atmosphere and steamy heat of Bombay, which in May keeps one in a continual state of clammy perspiration ! To wake up in Bombay one of those deadly still mornings which are a peculiar characteristic of the merry month of May, when the Island is enveloped in a heavy pall of smoke and vapour, and then to enjoy the early morning exhilaration of the air, the joyous note of the birds, and the all-pervading freshness of life at Mahableshwar, is one of the greatest changes in surroundings and climatic influence that can be experienced anywhere within the short space of 12 hours, unless, of course, one imagines the converse change of situation which an aerial flight from England in the winter to the South of France would produce. Al-

though Mahableshwar and Panchgani are only 12 miles apart, it seems somewhat singular that the former place should have a rainfall of over 300 inches during the monsoon, while the latter has only 70 inches.

There is a more or less gentle descent in the excellent red-earth roadway which runs from Mahableshwar to Panchgani. Consequently cycling one way is an exceedingly pleasant ride. It is possible to free-wheel most of the distance, although the road twists in short zig-zags and bends so frequently from one side to the other, it is necessary to exercise great caution in avoiding the motor traffic coming in the opposite direction. Starting off on a cycle at 11 o'clock in the morning, as I did, the sun is certainly rather fierce, and my hands were soon scorched red, but one encounters an invigorating breeze practically the whole way. The scenery is most fascinating and quite Alpine on a miniature scale. Not venturing to trundle a hired-bike uphill back to Mahableshwar again, I bribed two *Chokras* to take it back, and took my chance of getting a conveyance of some kind to do the return journey. This is where I miscalculated and I soon ascertained that neither a tonga or motor-car were available. I waylaid a number of motors, mostly well-laden with passengers and luggage going to Mahableshwar, on the off chance of getting a lift back, but did not succeed, I decided therefore, to

put up at Panchgani for the night and return by the service of motor-cars which carry passengers and mails between Wathar and Mahableshwar every morning. Evidently Panchgani does not cater for the casual visitor. After lunching on a tin of sardines, I got a very indifferent dinner in one of the hotels and had to sleep in a tent. One hotel was composed of a number of detached structures made of long grasses and birchwood. These primitive habitations are called *Chuppras*, and had more the appearance of a kraal or jungle native village than a modern caravanserai.

Some idea of the hospitality afforded in the hotel I put up at, may be gathered from the fact that it was not possible to obtain a bottle of soda water until I had waited nearly two hours, and had it not been for the sympathetic consideration of one of the residents, I should have gone to bed thirsty then. Panchgani serves up very good air, but it is almost necessary to literally eat it in order to make up for the shortcomings of hotel management, which is monopolized exclusively by the enterprising Parsee, who, whatever his other business capabilities may be, has much to learn in the art of catering.

With the advent of the motor-car, the salubrious heights of Mahableshwar and Panchgani became much more accessible than they had been formerly, when the quickest means of transport was a two-

horse phæton, which took about six or seven hours to accomplish the journey from Wathar, the nearest railway station, a distance of 40 miles. Then the journey from Bombay was an arduous and extremely tedious one, but not infrequently the appearance of a panther or leopard trotting in the gloaming alongside the vehicle on the way up the ghauts, lent some exhilaration to the feat of endurance. Even now with all the advantages of swift transit by motor-car, the journey is not accomplished without adventure. It is not an uncommon occurrence for the motor-bus to break down in the mountain fastnesses, and for the hapless passengers to be marooned all night amid scenes which are more wildly romantic than pleasant from the personal-comfort-point-of-view. By way of an interlude the motor-bus company played one of their favourite little jokes on me on my return journey. My servant who made the descent on a motor lorry got away to a bad start about 3 o'clock one Sunday afternoon and landed at Poona at 8 o'clock the next night. As a result I spent practically the whole day on Poona railway station waiting his arrival with my kit and a much-needed change of clothes. When he arrived he told me that the car had broken down on the Wai Ghaut and that they had had to spend the night on the roadside awaiting the advent of another car to complete the journey to Wathar.

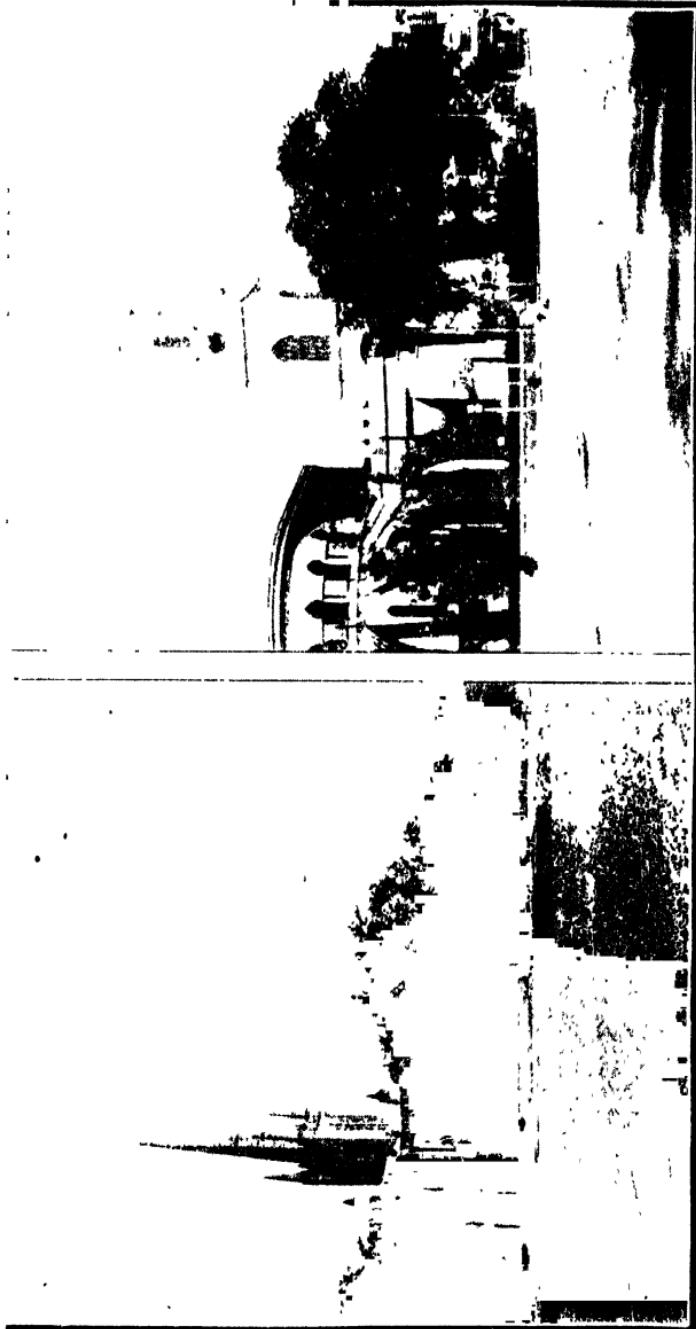
September, 16th.—After remaining many weeks in Poona, the Queen of the Deccan, and indulging in the excitement of the racing season, I return to Bombay *en route* to Delhi, arriving there in October.

As the result of the failure of the monsoon, Bombay is extremely unpleasant, being exceptionally hot and abominably dusty. In fact, its most notable characteristics, apart from its wonderfully variegated and picturesque exterior, are best described in three words : Dirt, Disease and Death. The city is in the throes of its second visitation of the Spanish *La Grippe*, a mysterious epidemic which is killing off the native population like flies. The mortality went up to a 1,000 a day and the burning ground in Queen's Road, the high surrounding walls of which were stacked up on the outside with huge piles of wood to be used in incinerating the corpses, was a gruesome enclosure of burning bodies. As one drove past along the main road, one could sometimes observe through the open gates, the flaming pyres, on which as many as 400 bodies were reduced to ashes daily, and above the walls the red glow of the ascending sparks from the burning stacks of wood had an eerie effect at night.

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Calcutta Cathedral on the left & Bombay Cathedral.

Photos by



XVI.

THE NEW CAPITAL.

IT was about the middle of October when I arrived at the new Capital, which was also in the deadly grip of the influenza scourge. Delhi like Calcutta revived some interesting memories. It was here, 17 years ago, I watched from the Jumma Musjid, Lord Curzon make his State entry into Delhi and for nearly a month was a State guest at the Durbar held in celebration of King Edward's proclamation as Emperor of India. Lord Kitchener, whose tragic end came as a staggering blow to the whole nation in the darkest hour of the war, was a commanding figure at this great historic *tamasha* and on the night of the State Ball in the Dewan-i-Am, the Hall of Public Audience when Delhi was the hub of the Moghul Empire, I watched the hero of Khartoum dance the State Quadrilles, and a rather inelegant performance it was, too, forsooth. Curzon on the other hand cut quite a stately figure, but Nathaniel is nothing if not elegant and in those days at any rate was something of a poseur, too.

Amongst the distinguished assembly were the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, and one of the most beautiful and brilliant personages was the

first Lady Curzon, resplendent in a famous gown woven with gold threads and a blaze of diamonds.

THE PAGEANT OF DEATH.

The famous Chandni Chowk with its ornamental Clock Tower, its broad dusty road, and the typical Oriental atmosphere of the squalid-looking shops on either side, murky alley-ways and devious, evil-looking side streets, giving a fleeting glimpse of the white domes and stately rose-coloured minarets of the Jumma Musjid, is a thoroughfare of vivid contrasts and eloquently reminiscent of the immutable traditions of the unchanging East. The roseate appearance of the massive gate of the Fort, with its many cupolas glistening in the brilliant sunlight, lends an impressive prospect to one end of this historic highway, where many imperial pageants and many resplendent rulers of the Moghul Empire, have issued forth in dazzling pomp and circumstance. Great Pro-Consuls, in all their gorgeous trappings and panoply of State, have held high carnival on various auspicious occasions on the same historic ground, amidst nearly similar surroundings, dominated by the imposing background of the Fort Gate and massive wall with its embattled ramparts going back to the glories of Akbar's time. A finer theatre for these martial spectacles of imperial might and authority could hardly be conceived. Some of them have not been without a

sensational and poignantly dramatic touch, as witness the memorable incident which occurred here when in 1912, Lord Hardinge, while proceeding in State on a gaily caparonized elephant with a glittering silver *howdah*, nearly lost his life from injuries caused by a bomb thrown by a seditious person from the verandah of one of the ramshackle buildings which line either side of the narrowest part of the Chowk.

But never before, possibly, has this historic thoroughfare presented such a contrast of tragic Eastern realism and unforgettable gruesomeness, as it afforded now. The pageant I witnessed in 1918 was the Pageant of Death in its most grim and fearsome aspect. Along the Chowk there was a continuous passing of corpses wrapped in coloured shrouds ornamented with flowers and tawdry tinsel. These poor victims of the influenza scourge, as they were borne along on stretchers, presented a horribly garish sight, the bodies slightly oscillating from one side to the other in unison with the movements of the bearers carrying them off to the burning ground. For want of better facilities, apparently, I saw a corpse being carried off in a handcart trundled along by one man, and in every direction I turned there was the same lugubrious procession in isolated groups converging on the main thoroughfare.

The squalid apothecary shops on either side of the Chowk were besieged throughout the whole day by a motley concourse of patients, some,

mostly women, waiting in *dhulies* for the attending doctor's arrival. I visited most of these shops, and found a large number of patients huddled up in blankets on the floor and in a very feeble condition. The doctors complained of being run off their feet and worked to death, and appeared to be utterly incapable of dealing with the extraordinary demands on their personal attention. The remedies applied were obviously of the crudest character. As an instance of this, a bearer I employed temporarily at Delhi informed me that his whole household, comprising six or seven persons, were down with the malady and his father died the same afternoon I left Delhi without receiving any medical attention. From what my servant told me, it appeared that after giving his father a dose of the medicine the doctor had prescribed without seeing the patient and for which he charged Rs. 2/8, the victim became worse, and the second dose finished him. The way my bearer related the story and described the effect the medicine had on the unfortunate man was almost funny, but I was not slow to appreciate its tragic significance, and it confirmed my previous conviction that more than half these people died of sheer neglect, where their end was not actually hastened by bad treatment.

But this is one of the many domestic problems, like that of sanitation and public health, which has

got to be solved if India's regeneration is to be built up on stable foundations, and seems to me a much more crying need than the ever-present agitation for political reform. The tremendous importance of spreading abroad throughout India a knowledge of sanitation and hygiene, is gradually becoming one of the most vital questions of the hour, but it is a problem beset with innumerable difficulties. On this point it is interesting to quote the following remarks from a speech recently delivered by Lord Ronaldshay :—

"Look at the task which confronts us in Bengal. We have to endeavour to exterminate the anopheles mosquito in order to rid the country of Malaria. We have to embark upon a campaign against the stegomyia mosquito to protect ourselves against a possible invasion of Yellow Fever. We have to try to revolutionise the immemorial habits of a whole people before we can hope to vanquish that small but malevolent parasite, the Hookworm. We have to take the field against tuberculosis and cholera, plague and dysentery, leprosy and kala-azar. These are a few of our enemies. What are the weapons which we require to enable us successfully to fight them. Knowledge widely diffused ; unlimited funds, and an ample supply of highly trained medical men and sanitarians. But these are precisely the things which we have not got. In place of knowledge we have

wide-spread ignorance, in place of wealth we have poverty".

With the exception of the towns and large cities, where under normal conditions there is no dearth of medical practitioners, good, bad and indifferent, India as a whole suffers acutely from the lack and the inefficiency of medical skill. There is a monumental mediocrity about the average Indian disciple of Aesculapius which to any other race not possessing the boundless simplicity and faith of the average Aryan would be considered one of the greatest menaces to public safety. But in the land where nothing matters, and the cult of "to-morrow" will do, that is a question of very little account, and on the principle of what the eye doesn't see the heart won't grieve about, a little suffering more or less amongst India's teeming mass of population is also a matter of small consequence. There is no cure like dying and the vast mass of Indians take this rough-and-ready doctrine lying down every time.

The following amusing little story may not be authentic, but it is not altogether unillustrative of the moral I have pointed out. The Babu hospital-assistant had been taken to task for not keeping proper charts of the patients. Next day he presented the following :—

- 8 A.M. The patient's life in low degree
- 10 A.M. Life in sink
- 11 A.M. Flit
- 1 P.M. Flut.

XVII.

THE MOGHUL METROPOLIS OF "DEAD CITIES."

HERE has been some remarkable changes in the Moghul metropolis of "dead Cities" since Lord Hardinge's regime. New Delhi, Phoenix-like has arisen from the ashes of the old citadels, but the association is a somewhat distant one and the relationship is about the same, so far as the former's external features are concerned, as Golder's Green might be said to bear a resemblance to the ancient glories of Old London. Anyhow, the new Capital, or as a Calcutta organ prefers to call it, Lord Hardinge's "Monumental folly," has in a very substantial measure been realised and we also have it on the authority of Lord Chelmsford that the scheme is going through and that Delhi will remain the capital of India. Why, nobody seems to understand, and, such is the ephemeral and apathetic state of public opinion in this country, that now nobody seems to care. The citizens of Calcutta plume themselves on the distinction that the city of "pale lasses and stinks," as someone irreverently dubbed the City of Palaces, ranks second in importance in the Empire, and if not in name Calcutta in

reality remains the Capital, the same as of yore. Bombay is equally convinced by reason of its situation, the importance of its port, and the size of its population, that it is *Urbs Prima in Indis*, and the second greatest city in the Empire. So the two sisters go on exercising their pretty little conceits and ever and anon gently chiding Madras, the Cinderella of the family, on her benighted and neglected condition, while both regard with a good deal of contemptuous pity the large aspirations and pretensions of Karachi, Bombay's industrious half-sister, which many think is given to building castles in the air. By the aid of aerial flight these may assume tangible shape some day, when the Northern port forms the principal terminus of the India-to-England-all-the-way-by-air-route. But at present that is all "in the air", although the recent performances of the two giant Handley-Page aeroplanes, one of which I witnessed land in Calcutta after completing the last stage of its flight of 4,000 miles from Cairo, has brought the week-end passage between Karachi and England somewhere within measurable range of practical achievement.

This, however, is all more or less in the speculative vein and a pretty wide digression from the question under review, namely the creation of New Delhi.

However, before reverting to the latter subject, I might quote the somewhat facetious prophecy of

a Madras contemporary, apropos a recent flight of fancy in India :—

"It is curious to note that the promoters have conquered the aversion to Delhi which, in and out of season, all good citizens of India avow, and have taken the seat of the Moghul emperors into their itinerary. They yield to none in their admiration of the charms of Chowringhee and are confident that the government exiles divorced by the dictates of duty from civilisation, will be sufficiently sated by the contemplation of Delhi's glorious memories to welcome the opportunity of an 800 mile flight for the purposes of spending a week-end in the Indian metropolis. The Saturday afternoon spectacle of the gathering of the wives and families on the Calcutta Maidan to welcome the arrival of the 'husbands plane' is something to look forward to."

LIFE IN LUTYEN'S LAND.

The most striking feature of the new capital is a ghostly-looking pile of immaculate white and extremely elongated proportions, known as the Secretariat. This casts an air of chasteness and phantomlike aloofness over surroundings, which, I should imagine, "sheds a gentle melancholy o'er the souls" of the unhappy dwellers of Lutyen's Land. The general prospect of the latter itself presents an air of austerity and undeviating regularity of design—the main idea of which appears to be that it can be imitated by any child who

possesses a box of bricks,—calculated to give one a severe pain in the back, while doubtless to the belated “garden city resident,” who has tarried over the convivial cup, it must cause a distressing amount of bewilderment and bad language before he discovers the particular abode in which, mayhap, his patient and loving spouse keeps anxious watch and wait for her lord and master. But among the immortals such things seldom happen, while a little austere detachment and severity of exterior imparts a semblance of tone and dignity which it is not in mortals to command. If the new Capital’s garden suburb is not particularly prepossessing, it doubtless affords the few of God’s chosen more material comfort than the denizens of the canvas city, immediately adjacent, can for many years hope to aspire to in Hardinge’s Hard Lines. In this it establishes a nice distinction and a fitting precedent, by which one may discern at a glance “who’s who”, and easily spot the men of the moment.*

* To show that my impression of this typical bit of suburbia, which is one of the most extensive oases of bricks and mortar in the new Capital, is not an overrated one, I may quote the remark of a recent visitor that appeared a few weeks ago in a Calcutta paper :—

“ Picture to yourselves the tortures to which the unhappy wretches who are chained to the chariot of the Government of India are condemned during four or five dusty months at Delhi every year. But you can’t picture it, so I will try and point the awful moral by contrast. Most of your gentle readers, pursues the same correspondent, have gardens attached to their houses. All of them live within easy reach of the Maidan, greenness and liberty. Now look at the contrast presented by the quarters assigned to those who occupy the Seats of the Mighty during the Delhi legislative session. They are to be housed in wretched little houses for all the world like Brixton villas, with shabby backyards doing duty for gardens.”

Unfortunately, when I visited its illustrious precincts, the new Capital was as dead as the proverbial door-nail, or as somnolent in its quietude as the most defunct of the dead cities that encircle it with their all-pervading presence of desolation and gloom. Over Khyber-Pass, as I drove in a tonga by a row of deserted-looking shops, one a restaurant with a pretentious name which I forget, one of the attendants lounging near the entrance, dashed after me with a handbill containing a cordial invitation to try the excellence of the entertainment provided, but the solitude of the scene oppressed me and I passed on to the Kingsway, unheeding the call for a much-needed *Chota* to speed the "parting golden orb of day."

However, for a dead city I never saw one more beautifully "laid out" than New Delhi. Kingsway is a superb highway, with a splendid metalled road, lined with tall trees. The evenness of the surface of the road would compare not discreditably with the great motor track at Weybridge. It runs as straight as a die for two or three miles, and if New Delhi fails in every other respect this should make a glorious scorching track for motorists. To walk or drive along it in a tonga makes one feel quite weary to contemplate the distance one has got to go to get to the other end, especially when one is obsessed with the knowledge that there is *nothing* at the end, and no alternative but to come all the way back.

Kingsway is New Delhi's main thoroughfare, but like the capital itself it leads to nowhere, and to all intents and purposes is an attenuated *cul-de-sac*. Still, what's a few millions wasted in connection with town-planning experiments and pet memorial schemes in the decayed land of the Great Moghuls ?

